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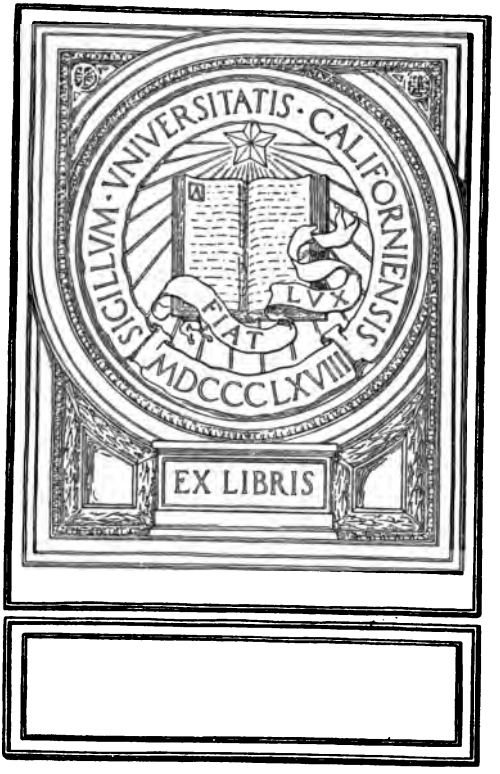

THE
Truth About the War.

J. TABURNO,
ST. PETERSBURG.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

TRANSLATED BY
VICTORIA VON KREUTER.

PUBLISHED BY
FRANKLIN HUDSON PUBLISHING CO.,
KANSAS CITY, MO., U. S. A.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Mr. J. Taburno, a civil engineer by profession and a special correspondent of the *Novoe Vremia,* went about the middle of December, 1904, to the theater of military operations, for the purpose, as stated in the brief preface of his work, of "becoming acquainted with the true condition of our troops in Manchuria, and presenting it in its true light." In April, 1905, he placed before the public the results of his observations in a book entitled "The Truth About the War," which, in addition to great literary merit, is invaluable as an accurate, unprejudiced, impartial account of the operations near Mukden, as a sincere and conscientious research into the cause of Russian failure, giving a clear insight into the true condition of affairs.

In the *Russki Invalid* of June 25th, General Parensoff, of the Russian General Staff, highly commends Mr. Taburno's book, his opinion being shared by "F. M.," likewise a general of the General Staff, editor of the *Russki Invalid,* and concludes with the words, "This is a remarkable, an excellent book."

His other works, "Review of the Financial and Economical Condition of Russia for the Last Twenty Years," a thorough and conscientious research in the domain of political economy, "The Reminiscences of an Insurgent," treating on the Revolution of Poland, and other stories, are likewise of great merit.

Mr. Taburno is not an advocate of peace and gives good reasons why it should not be concluded. He says that it is neces-

sary to make the Russian soldiers understand that victory is indispensable and victory will crown their arms.

He little knew, when publishing his book in April, that a month later the grant of equal rights to the subjects of all nationalities and religions composing the population of Russia, as advocated by him at the close of his book, would be an accomplished fact, thus once more demonstrating that war, this so-called scourge of nations, is an evil which, as shown by the entire history of the world, brings blessings in its wake; the blessings brought by this bloody and disastrous war to Russia being incalculable.

It is through the courtesy of American military authorities that I had the privilege of reading the book of Mr. Taburno, of having the possibility of translating and publishing it, and I beg them to accept my most sincere thanks for the aid tendered me.

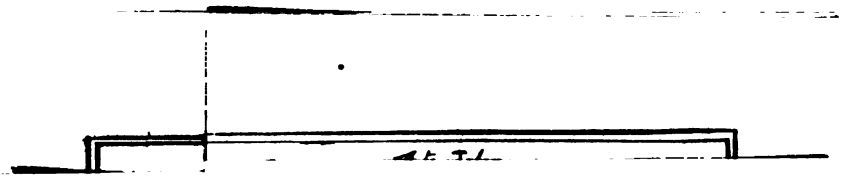
I beg likewise the American Army to accept this humble translation of a remarkable work, while craving indulgence for the imperfections of this translation, as an homage to "the honorable calling of the soldier," for which I have all admiration and all esteem.

VICTORIA VON KREUTER.

PREFACE.

So many conflicting rumors reached us during the last months of the past year, from the theater of military operations, on the condition of our Army, that it was very difficult to see clearly into them, and still more so to find out anything on the true state of affairs. In the middle of December of last year I started for the seat of war, for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the true position of our troops in Manchuria and presenting everything in its true light. The development of events forced me to remain there much longer than I expected, and to witness many gladdening and positive facts, but, alas! a great many more negative ones, at the remembrance of which the heart grows heavy. My moral duty is to lay before the Russian public all I have observed and seen. It well might be that, as a civilian, a non-specialist in military matters, I have made mistakes in some of my deductions; but I can say one thing: the facts shall be given such as they are, such as I found them. I crave forgiveness in advance that my narrative will not always keep strictly to the chronological order of events.

It may be that the data given by me will not be deemed sufficient, but this is because many of them cannot be communicated as yet, as they might be of use to the Japanese.



THE TRUTH ABOUT THE WAR.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE ROAD TO MUKDEN.

I met along the whole road from Samara to Kharbin echelons of troops and military supplies sent to the theater of war. I cannot say that what I saw and heard made a favorable impression on me. The tales of disorders, caused on the one or the other of the stations on that long road by detachments of troops, testified to the lack of discipline and the defective organization of the transportation of military echelons. The troops sent in entire units (by companies, batteries, squadrons) proceeded in order. Such was not the case with the echelons sent to complete detachments already at the seat of war. They created disorders, got drunk, refused to obey their chiefs, etc. In my opinion, this ought not to be wondered at. The men forming these echelons were taken straight from the plough, uniformed, and sent off under command of reserve officers, often only second lieutenants, who lost their heads at the first complication.

The further I proceeded, the more vivid grew before me the picture of the imperfection of the measures adopted. The dark coloring to this picture was added by the defective traffic and movement of trains, on account of which the echelons were always late in arriving at the *etape* stations. For example, the dinner for a certain unit is prepared for 11 a. m., but, on account of the lateness of the arrival of the train, it is served to the men at 10 p. m., or sometimes still later. What kind of a dinner could it be, and what could be the condition of the food at that time?

This circumstance had no little effect on the temper of the soldiers. It is difficult for me to understand why the troops could not proceed with our excellent field kitchens (on my way back I saw that some units had those kitchens in the cars and cooked their meals on them), the necessary number of which ought to have been prepared for the troops sent for the filling up of the ranks of the units—*i. e.*, those that traveled without their housekeeping *personnel.*

The culminating point of disorderly traffic was to be found on the Trans-Baikal Railway line (at the present time it is far better). I sent a telegram to the *Novoe Vremia* from the Manchuria station with regard to this condition of affairs, but it was unrecognizable when it reached the readers.

I was afterwards told that it was impossible to give information as to our movements of troops, because news with regard to our means of transportation of troops might reach the enemy. It seems to me, however, that it is rather *naïve* to suppose that what anyone could see, not excluding foreigners (there were two Americans proceeding to some gold mines on the train in which I traveled), would be unknown to the enemy once it was of interest to him. This is everybody's secret.

Kharbin, the principal point in the rear of the Manchurian Army and the center of railway and local administration, makes a vivid impression testifying to the successful colonizing capabilities of the Russians. Some six or seven years ago this locality was a desert. At present it is a flourishing city, the center of commerce, with wide commercial relations, steamer traffic, and a seething commercial life. However gladdening it is to notice here the power of the Russians, an entirely different impression is made by Kharbin as the rear of our Army. But this shall be discussed later.

*A Station on the Trans-Baikal Railway.

Chapter II.

IN THE ARMY.

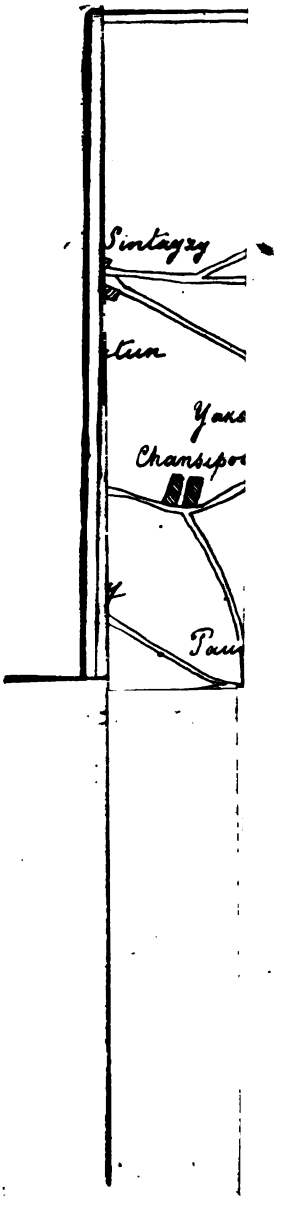
Upon my arrival at Mukden, and the necessary permit having been obtained, I started to inspect the disposition of our armies. To be just, it must be admitted that excellent care was taken of the soldier. It is not probable that in any other war such attention had been given to the soldier's life: he was provided with warm clothing, good footwear, warm quarters, plentiful and excellent food. It seems to me that the soldiers have never fared so well in time of peace as in the present war: everywhere and always did they have hot food, even in battle. The Russian field kitchen is priceless in time of war. The sanitary condition of the Army is such that nothing better could be desired. The number of sick is very small.

In regard to the *esprit* and the *morale* of the Army, I must say that, although cheerfulness could not be denied the troops, they were not at the height necessary to insure a glorious victory. Quite a large number of officers, of the higher as well as of the lower ranks, not counting the civilian employees and surgeons, the number of which is quite considerable, were not in favor of the war; the lack of sympathy of the Russian public with the operations in the Far East, the insufficient consciousness of the necessity of Russian preponderance in that region, were strongly felt; last of all, the admission that the enemy was right to a certain degree—all this brought a passive condition among the intellectual members of the Army, and could not inspire it with the energy so necessary to victory.

It is not to be doubted that the feelings of the intelligent part of the Army had penetrated into the rank and file. It is true that each officer and soldier, brought up in military disci-

pline, imbued with the formula of unswerving obedience to the chiefs, were ready to fulfill their duty according to their oath. But the enthusiasm was lacking, and consequently the powerful factor ensuring victory even to the weaker army; there was a lack of intelligent comprehension of the aim and its attainment, serving as a forceful and conscious motive power, and, according to the characteristics of the Japanese General Nodzu—as the principle of discipline, as stated in one of his orders to his army. My impression, in general, was that the troops would fight well whenever their leaders would be at the necessary height; but where these would show lack of strength, the troops, having within them the germ of weakened discipline, might easily fall below the standard, since they have no intelligent understanding as to the aim of their activity.

It was already known on January 7th that on the 12th would take place the offensive movement of our right flank (General Grippenberg's army), and that, in case of success, the entire front would follow. I was advised to go to General Kaulbars' troops, occupying the center. I did so. Unfortunately, I did not witness the events which took place at Sandepoo, so that I report them not as an eye-witness, but according to absolutely trustworthy narratives of others.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Chapter III.

THE OPERATIONS AT SANDEPOO.

On the eve of the operations the condition of affairs on our right flank was as follows: In the nearest villages south and west of Sandepoo were small advanced detachments of the enemy some two to three companies and one to two squadrons strong, while farther away, some 20 to 25 *versts* distant (at Tiadousianpoo and Siaobiakhe), were large reserves, and some comparatively small units in the other villages along the river Taytsekhe.

The disposition of the Russian troops was as follows: the 8th Corps was opposite Sandepoo; to the east of this point was the 10th; somewhat to the west, the 1st Siberian Corps: still more west, General Mischenko's army (between Sifontay and the Liaokhe River), the reserves being formed by the mixed Rifles Corps.

The total strength of the Russians, of which they could dispose for the attack, consisted of 84,000 bayonets and sabers.* (See the appended map.)

The problem laid before these forces was, in general traits, the following: The 1st Corps was to turn the left flank of the enemy, taking on its way the villages situated southwest of Sandepoo as far as Soumapoo (see appended map); after having taken possession of these villages, one brigade was to be detached and sent in the direction of the village of Dotay—*i. e.*, almost in rear of Sandepoo. One division of the 8th Corps was to attack Sandepoo from the west, and at the same time the above-

*The 8th Corps—22,000 bayonets; the 1st Siberian—18,000; the mixed Rifles Corps—16,000; General Mischenko's army—about 6,000 bayonets and sabers, and 22,000 bayonets of the 10th Army Corps, although this unit was not to take part with its entire strength in the attack.

mentioned brigade, placing itself under the orders of the commander of the 8th Corps, was to attack from the south. The other division of the 8th Corps and the entire 10th Corps were to remain in their positions and open fire against the enemy, thus attracting the attention of the Japanese by this demonstration and aiding the attacking units; after the taking of Sandepoo, they were to advance.

General Mischenko's troops were to make demonstrations in the rear of the enemy.

The principal positions of the Japanese were strongly fortified along the whole front. The advanced positions were masked by false hedges of *ghiaolan;* wire entanglements and wooden guns were placed at certain points.

One division of the 8th Corps (the 14th, I believe), which was to attack Sandepoo, was, on the eve of the impending operations, at Ashitor, where it had been sent for the support of General Mischenko, sorely pressed by the Japanese after the unavailable Inkoü raid. The attack was consequently postponed until the arrival of this division. It reached the Russian troops in the night of January 12th, and, after a 30-*verst* march, without having scarcely rested at all, went into battle early on the 12th, captured a row of settlements on the left bank of the river Khunkhe, some 2 to 3 *versts* from Sandepoo. The 1st Siberian Army Corps occupied during the night of January 13th the village of Khongoutay, after which a stubborn fight ensued in the vicinity of Soumapoo, which it did not succeed in taking, in spite of reinforcements sent from the reserves. The occupation of Khongoutay and the battle of Soumapoo cost almost half of this corps: about 10,000 men were put *hors de combat.* The brigade, which was to march against the village of Dotay and advance from that point with the 14th Division of the 8th Corps against Sandepoo, could not reach its destination, and, under pressure of the enemy, marched not in the direction designated, but turned to the north at a considerable distance from

Dotay, endeavoring to leave the rayon in which it could coöperate in the attack of Sandepoo. Noticing the movements of this brigade, the commander of the 8th Corps made it turn back and placed it on the line Malandan-Youoozipow. The brigade thus was several hours late, in consequence of which it was necessary to arrest the advance of the 14th Division, marching in the direction of Sandepoo according to the disposition. However, coming under a shower of hostile bullets, it could not remain in inactivity under this fire, and alone attacked Sandepoo. Notwithstanding the stubborn defense of the enemy, the division succeeded in capturing the suburbs of Sandepoo—Baoteytsze, Siaosooza, and Lydziavopoo, which, on account of the lack of accurate survey sketches, were taken for Sandepoo itself and which were strongly fortified. This is why the chief of the division reported the taking of Sandepoo while in reality this was not so. Evacuating the suburbs, the Japanese left infernal preparations behind them in the *fanzas:* everywhere along the walls, in the *kanas,** wherever it was at all possible, they placed and arranged all kinds of explosive material, as grenades, shrapnel, dynamite, etc., and at the last moment set fire to the *fanzas,* so that when our troops entered the place, all this exploded and we suffered great losses. I was told that on the tables were left small bags, seemingly containing money; the soldiers rushed towards them, took them up, and at that moment there was an explosion; it was found out that an electric current, causing the explosion, was closed at the time the bag was picked up.

Sandepoo was consequently still to be taken. It proved to be strongly fortified by all kinds of means, including stone and beton fortifications. The troops of the 14th Division went into battle in remarkably good order, exactly as they were taught in time of peace. It was their baptism of fire. They were met with a hot rifle and machine-gun fire (the machine guns were first brought into action during these operations). There was

*Along the walls a kind of brick settees are disposed at the height of a man's waist. There are conduits for heating running within these settees.

found before Sandepoo a lake covered with broken ice, of the size of which nothing was known and which was shown in the wrong place on the map. In fact, the real plan of Sandepoo and its vicinity had nothing in common with the plan of which we disposed. The enemy arrested our advance, and the 14th Division, being unable to maintain any longer the positions occupied by it, decided to retreat at 2 o'clock in the night.

On that same day the mixed Rifles Corps, forming the reserve, marched to the rescue, and two of its regiments endeavored to attack Sandepoo a second time. This attempt remained without result and cost a great many victims—the Fifth Regiment had only 300 men left in its ranks.

During the above-mentioned operations the Japanese succeeded in concentrating large bodies of troops in the center and in the neighborhood of Sandepoo; counter-attacks were made here and great pressure was brought against the center. It was threatened with the breaking through of the lines. The Commander-in-chief then ordered to retreat to the former positions and to begin fortifying them. We lost in these operations about 14,000 men in killed and wounded, and wasted over 67,000 projectiles, exhausting almost the entire supply of the Second Army (there remained only 5,000).

Thus ended our attempt to occupy Sandepoo and take here the offensive. At any rate, it could not have ended otherwise: the enemy had concentrated here 100,000 men, who had come from under Port Arthur. This is when the premature surrender of Port Arthur was felt: should the fortress have held out one week or ten days longer, the January operations at Sandepoo would undoubtedly have been crowned with success, and the consequences might have proved fatal to the enemy. It may be asked, Why had Kuropatkin not undertaken these operations some ten days earlier? It was because the mixed Rifles Corps had not yet arrived from Russia, and Grippenberg's forces were insufficient without it. This is, at least, the answer I received

to this question; and, moreover, General Kuropatkin did not expect a speedy fall of Port Arthur.

During this action General Mischenko was wounded in the knee and General Kondratovich in the chest; two of the generals loving their country and true Russian patriots, believing firmly in the strength and power of the Russian people and the Russian soldier.

Chapter IV.

THE DEPARTURE OF GENERAL GRIPPENBERG.

After General Kuropatkin had given the order to return to the positions and begin fortifying them, General Grippenberg, unwilling to remain under the command of General Kuropatkin, went back to St. Petersburg. It is difficult to give an explanation of such an action on the part of the commander of the Second Army. It was impossible for him not to know that his departure would have a very unfavorable influence upon the war. If General Grippenberg gathered from General Kuropatkin's actions at Sandepoo, as well as from things in general, that he was not the man who ought to be at the head of the Manchurian Army, it would have been his duty as a citizen to lay his opinion before the Head of the Empire, even if his suppositions had not been found entirely accurate and proven—but only in case no personal reasons were involved in such an action. At any rate, he ought to have acted differently, and not have followed the course he chose. He might have sent to the Emperor a trustworthy man as a messenger with a detailed report, and, without abandoning his post, awaited the imperial decision, sacrificing his personal feeling of *amour propre* for the time being.

It is indubitable that Grippenberg's departure in the way he proceeded about it brought dire results. It is unpardonable for him to have overlooked them, as he could not be sure that the enemy would not take advantage of this incident. Alas! his departure played a poor *rôle* in the success of the Mukden operations. Is it possible that General Grippenberg did not suffer within his heart jointly with every Russian and every man loving Russia, at the news of the Mukden defeat? Is it not possible that truth might be found in the conjectures of those who

believed General Grippenberg was not grieving so much over this painful fact, as ready to take advantage of it to corroborate his opinion that nothing else could have been expected of Kuropatkin, and that this would not have taken place had any other man occupied Kuropatkin's post?

Coming back, in particular, to the January operations at Sandepoo, I must state first of all the opinion which General Grippenberg disseminated among the public by his interviews with newspaper correspondents, published in several papers.

The General said that with the forces at his disposition he could have surrounded the enemy "with an iron ring" and destroyed him. I do not wish to call this boasting, or even self-delusion, but will say that it is only the outcome of his ignorance of the enemy and the fact of being carried away by his subject. Why could not General Grippenberg take Sandepoo, since the Japanese forces defending this point were less strong in numbers than his own? The taking of Sandepoo was the principal problem laid before him. How could he have carried out this entire operation when the forces of the enemy, occupying, moreover, strongly fortified positions, had increased, while he remained without any cover, the bitter frost impeding the troops from digging entrenchments? The statement that he could with an army of 60,000 men surround the Japanese troops, counting 100,000 soldiers, seasoned in the fights before Port Arthur, shows that he had not the slightest knowledge as to the enemy. There is no doubt as to the fact that the Japanese would continue to reinforce their troops in the neighborhood of Sandepoo, a thing which could be prevented only in one way—by taking the offensive along the entire front. Such an operation was equivalent to suicide. General Grippenberg, as the commander of one of the armies, knew the mode and degree of fortification of the hostile positions, and he must, consequently, have known that to attack these positions by the front was to lay down his troops before them without achieving any results in the same way as he

would have laid low his entire army of 60,000 men had he attacked behind their fortified positions the troops of the enemy twice as strong numerically as his own. He had already lost 14,000 out of his ranks. Independently of the fact that our troops could have been destroyed, the enemy might have taken advantage of this victory and have advanced in the tracks of the defeated Second Manchurian Army, bringing about the destruction of the entire Manchurian Army, the results being far more terrible than those which took place before Mukden about one month later. Was it possible for the Commander-in-chief to ignore this and to place on one card the outcome of the entire war, basing his actions on the very dubious deductions of General Grippenberg? Only the most critical condition of our Army could have forced the Commander-in-chief to put into execution the plan of General Grippenberg, and at that time the Russian troops were not in such a situation.

Should we even admit that General Kuropatkin was wrong throughout, yet in the operations at Sandepoo he acted rightly. Several corps commanders, who have participated in the Sandepoo affair and who do not defend General Kuropatkin, have said to me that we could not do anything else but retreat. Generally speaking, the whole business—the advance against Sandepoo is rather incomprehensible. It is said, however, that it was insisted upon by General Grippenberg, who was its initiator.

When General Kuropatkin learned of General Grippenberg's intention to leave the Army, he asked him to speak to him by telephone; but General Grippenberg, alleging sickness, refused his request, proposing to carry on the negotiations by means of the officer of the day. General Kuropatkin asked then that the telephone be carried to the patient's room, but the latter did not agree to this. After this General Kuropatkin tried in writing to make him desist from his intention to leave the Army. Recognizing the usefulness of his service as commander of the Second Army, he addressed himself to his sentiment of duty and

love of the Emperor, the Army, and his country, and pointed out to him that his departure might have great, unfavorable consequences. Nothing, no persuasions whatever, could induce General Grippenberg to change the decision he had taken: self-love triumphed over duty. The excuses proffered by the Commander-in-chief and, maybe, even his humiliation (he wanted to come in person, but knew that he would not be received) could not palliate the offense of the ambitious General. All this is difficult to believe. A man, invested with enormous power—the power of a dictator, the power of taking life—is forced to humiliate himself, to entreat his subordinate, though commander of an independent army, to fulfill his duty. Here we find the consequences, the worthy fruit, brought about by the bureautic *régime*. Here do we see clearly corruption and ruin.

I have dwelt so long on this incident because the departure of General Grippenberg has been greatly commented upon in Russia and in the Army among the officers and the soldiers whom news reaches in the most distorted guise. The soldier knew that General Grippenberg had refused to speak to the Commander-in-chief. According to comments, it was believed that General Kuropatkin not only had no desire to take the defensive, but retreated when our troops could have defeated the enemy, and that this circumstance forced General Grippenberg to leave the Army. Thus we see that these comments destroyed subordination on the one hand, and on the other disseminated among the troops distrust of the Commander-in-chief—*i. e.*, undermined the two elements which, in the present war, are the only motors of our Army.

Chapter V.

PROPOSED SECOND ATTACK OF SANDEPOO.

A lull ensued after the unsuccessful attempt to turn the left flank of the enemy. Mukden was again filled with officers, who had left the city for the time of the operations; the life of the rear, seething with gossip, quarrels, and drunkenness, was resumed. At the front the fortification of the positions was arduously pursued. Our attention was principally drawn to our right flank. Our positions were speedily strengthened and large-caliber guns were placed opposite Sandepoo. The enemy likewise did not sleep; he also began strengthening his positions, especially those of the center, where they had placed 11-inch guns brought from before Port Arthur, which rendered them almost inaccessible and allowed them to be defended by comparatively small units.

Towards the end of January talk was current of a second attack on the Japanese left flank. An uncertain rumor in the beginning, it grew more and more defined until it was known in Mukden, and consequently among the Japanese, that the 12th of February was the day designated for the attack. As this date approached the rumors grew, awakening most improbable suppositions: some asserted that we had resolved to succeed regardless of cost; others maintained that the attempt would come to nothing and would involve great losses, that we would lay low several tens of thousands of men and win no results. I likewise shared the latter opinion, as it was known that the Japanese had concentrated 110,000 men at this point.

The 10th of February set in. Anxiety for the issue of this attack began to take possession of everybody.

Mukden was deserted; the officers joined their troops; the

surgeons, who were without work, likewise disappeared. The railway depot and the platform of the station, where until then life seethed as in an anthill, were empty. The remaining sick were taken out of the hospitals and placed in cars to be transported to the north, while these establishments were being cleaned and prepared to receive new victims of the war. The railway tracks near the stations were cleared, and the disorder which until now had reigned was superseded by order. Mukden was unrecognizable. The gay, even licentious life was replaced by serious concentration. All faces showed anxiety and preoccupation. The Chinese were mysteriously silent, and the various traders, who had come from Russia, Shanghai, and Chefoo, Caucasians, Greeks, Frenchmen—the inevitable evil following the Army like hungry dogs or ravens—looked careworn and conversed in whispers with each other. The evident coolness of the Russians acted encouragingly upon them, and only the news that a turning movement was being made by the Japanese on Liaokhe, whispered for an instant and discredited by our Staff, darkened the faces. I always believed in the possibility of the success of such a turning movement, as it was known to me that one of our secret service men had sent a Chinaman with the news of the impending turning movement. But General Oukhar-Oronovich, in charge of the service of information, drove him out, disbelieving the report, and even desisting from paying him the sum agreed to with the agent. Moreover, a Chinaman spoke to me about this turning movement; all this taking place in the first days of February.

In the morning of the 11th I went to the staff of the Second Army. On the square, along the road to the depot, quiet reigned supreme, and only from time to time somebody would be seen hurrying to the train going south.

Upon arriving at the rayon of the Second Army I noticed great activity. The troops were already in their positions. An observation post had been arranged for General Kaulbars, com-

manding the army. To-morrow or the day after, according to order, a fierce battle would begin, carrying off several tens of thousands of the best citizens of two nations.

The spirit of the troops was cheerful: all were glad of taking the offensive, all were ready to die so they be allowed to advance and not to retreat. "We have to die anyhow; at least let us die attacking, and not retreating, as we have done so far," were the words heard among the officers and men. The Russian soldier does not like to retreat. All thirst to rush against the enemy, while what comes next will be as the Lord God wills and the luck of war brings. Here, among these intrepid soldiers, who, without any other thought, are ready to lay down their lives only out of duty and the oath given to the Emperor and their country, the heart grows more peaceful and pusillanimity has no room.

A great number of guns was concentrated on our front in the neighborhood of Sandepoo. It was proposed to prepare the attack by artillery fire, a thing we had overlooked in the January operations. The plan of Sandepoo was taken from a balloon. This village proved to be nothing but one mass of fortifications—stone redoubts, bombproof shelters, wire entanglements, pits, etc. The day of the attack was kept secret; at least, it was thought to be a secret, though many spoke openly of the 12th of February as being the date designated. After the departure of General Grippenberg, General Kaulbars was given, on February 3d, the command of the Second Army. It was reinforced by a mixed brigade, composed of picked men of the 1st Rifles Corps, and was drawn up on the right bank of the river Khunkhe.

Before the proposed attack the Second Army, which was to lead this operation, consisted of the 8th Army Corps—32 battalions, 4 *sotnias,* and 152 guns, in position opposite Sandepoo; the 10th Army Corps—32 battalions, 6 *sotnias,* and 138 guns, in position to the left (somewhat east of the 8th Corps); the mixed Rifles Corps—32 battalions and 114 guns, on the right

(west of the 8th Army Corps); further the Liaokhe detachment—12 *sotnias* and 16 guns; and still more to the west, General Rennenkampf's (formerly General Mischenko's) detachment—26 *sotnias,* 32 guns, and the remainder of the Orenburg Division of General Tolmachoff—about 3½ *sotnias.* The reserve was formed by the 1st Siberian Army Corps, already under General Gerngross—30 battalions, 6 squadrons, and 64 guns. The total numerical strength of the Second Army amounted to 115,000 bayonets and sabers and 516 guns. In addition to this, the Second Army could count upon the support of the general strategic reserves of the Commander-in-chief, consisting of from 15,000 to 20,000 bayonets and 50 guns. Consequently the strength could be increased to 130,000 bayonets and sabers and 570 guns—quite a formidable force.

According to the disposition, drawn up on the 9th or 10th of February, the 8th Army Corps was to take possession of Sandepoo after the artillery preparation; the 10th Corps was to capture several villages situated east of Sandepoo and await the results of the operations of the 8th Army Corps, while supporting the latter; the mixed Rifles Corps was to secure the occupation of Sandepoo; the duties of the cavalry lay in the observation and security service on the right flank. Such, in general traits, was the problem laid before the Second Army. The above-mentioned disposition was not made known to the army beforehand, but was to be delivered at the last moment, together with the order designating the day of the attack.

But it was found out towards the evening of February 11th: (1) that the Japanese were cognizant of our disposition, including the minutest details; (2) that the enemy had concentrated over 120,000 men against our Second Army; (3) that the Japanese were advancing against the 10th Army Corps and likewise east of this unit; and (4) that large hostile bodies of troops attacked and pressed upon our left flank. It was decided to

desist from a second operation against Sandepoo. The 1st Siberian Army Corps and General Rennenkampf received orders to march to the left flank of the First Army (General Rennenkampf started immediately, while the 1st Corps came afterwards). It was evident that a serious affair was close at hand. But where? Therein lay the entire question.

Chapter VI.

DIARY OF EVENTS NEAR MUDKEN.

The further course of events in the vicinity of Mukden I will give in the shape of a diary, such as I wrote them down on the spot.

February 13.—The weather was dreadful; a snowstorm was raging. It was proposed that the troops of the Third Army should take the bridge on the Shakhe River while the other units were making demonstrations. The bridge was taken, but on the following day it was retaken by the enemy.

During the night of the 13th and 14th of February the troops of the Second Army attacked and occupied Baotaydze, but could not keep this point. The *okhotniks* harassed the enemy. The Liaokhe detachment, in observation at Liaokhe, has been reformed. It is incomprehensible. It is said that, on account of General Rennenkampf's detail to the left wing and the illness of General Mischenko, there is nobody to whom the command of this unit could be entrusted. This is very difficult to believe.

February 14th and 15th.—The Japanese attack along the entire front. The turning column has been clearly defined. General Bürger, commanding one brigade of infantry, artillery, probably three batteries, and cavalry, started on a forced march to Sinmintin for the purpose of occupying this point. He was too late—it was occupied by the Japanese before the arrival of the Russian detachment, and Bürger was forced to go back. By this time the Japanese had already occupied the road from Sinmintin to Mukden; it was necessary to divide the troops into two detachments: the one arrived at the Imperial Tombs, the other to the Youshitay station, and the artillery lost its train.

February 16th.—The mixed Rifles Corps on the right flank

was to take the positions of the 8th Army Corps, while this unit was to march to the north in the vicinity of Mukden. But the mixed Rifles Corps proved incapable of solving this problem, and, pressed by the enemy; retreated partly to the left bank of the Khunkhe and partly to Peytkhoza, Shuango, and Maturan. A cannonade started at 6:30 a. m. and lasted until nightfall. The enemy attacked several times our positions in front of Beytaydze, but unsuccessfully. Preparations for retreat began to be made at 3:30 p. m. The artillery *matériel* was being taken off from the positions and sent away on February 17th.

February 17th.—The 8th Army Corps occupied the rear positions and it fell to the share of these troops to cover the retreat instead of the mixed Rifles Corps. It was found out at 7 a. m. that Siaolapooza was occupied by hostile troops consisting of the three arms. At the same time the Japanese made energetic attacks against the 8th Army Corps from the south and gradually likewise from the right bank of the Khunkhe, where the 9th Division of General Nogi's army was operating with four batteries which opened a hot fire. It was difficult for the 8th Corps to withstand a simultaneous attack almost from three sides: from the south, the west, and partly from the rear. The commander of the corps rode to Maturan to the commander of the Second Army, in order to report in person on the condition of affairs. Just at that time General Kaulbars was seeing off the 1st Siberian Army Corps, which was to advance at a forced march to our left flank to join General Linevich's troops. One brigade of the 72d Division was likewise sent there. General Kaulbars sent out of his strategic reserve two batteries and two infantry regiments as reinforcements to the 8th Corps; they were to take up positions in the river bend opposite Petkhoza (shown on the map), so as to attack the Japanese in the flank. Their operations assisted the 8th Corps, and the Japanese were forced to retreat from the positions occupied by them. After their defeat at this point, the Japanese marched towards the north

and occupied the village of Sentkhayza. A mixed division was formed towards the evening, which, under command of General Golembatovski, crossed the river at Shuango in order to attack the enemy at Sentkhayza. The Japanese were driven out of this point, where they left even several machine guns behind. This successful attack arrested the advance of the Japanese on the left bank of the Khunkhe, but could not impede the enemy from marching towards the north.

General Kaulbars left for Mukden, General Launitz taking temporarily the command of the Second Army, who also directed the retreat. On that day the enemy occupied the village of Salinpoo, situated 16 *versts* west of the Mukden station. The 25th Division was sent here, and at 3 p. m. it was met by the enemy with a hot fire. Our attacks were repulsed, and the enemy made several counter-attacks, which we succeeded in repulsing, causing great losses to the hostile troops. On both sides they were large: ours amounted to 2,000, while those of the Japanese were still greater. The fight lasted well into the night.

A new disposition was drawn up on account of the retreat of the mixed Rifles Corps, according to which the retreat of the Second Army was to be made in the following order: the 10th Corps was to march on the village of Touëlpoo; the 8th Corps (the 14th Division on Tatay and the 15th Division marching in the rear guard along the left bank of the Khunkhe) was to cover the general retreat of the Second Army; the column of General Tolmachoff was to protect the right flank, and the column of Golembatovski had to march along the right bank of the Khunkhe, moving on a line with the 15th Division. This column, forming part of the rear guard, was, for some reason or other, not subordinate to the chief of the rear guard, but some other who was not operating here.

February 18th.—At 2 a. m. the Second Army received orders to begin immediately the retreat. When General Ivanoff, chief of the 15th Division, approached Davanganpoo, it was found

that the opposite bank of the Khunkhe (the village of Shuango) was occupied by the Japanese, and Golembatovski was nowhere to be found, as he had marched to Mukden in obedience to orders received from someone. This, naturally, brought disorder into the plan of the retreat. General Ivanoff, having remained at that point for some time and allowed his troops to rest, began to retreat on Tsantapoo; but, not finding here the troops of the 10th Corps, which were to await his arrival at this point, and attacked by the enemy in the flank, he retreated to the village of Tatay, where the troops of the Third Army had arrived by that time. As the enemy was concentrating large forces in the Salinpoo rayon, the Second Army was ordered to assemble on the right bank of the Khunkhe, while the Third was to occupy positions between the Khunkhe and the bridge over the Shakhe (Soukhoudiapoo-Lanshanpoo-Linshinpoo-Sakhepoo). The troops of the Second Army moved towards the Khunkhe in two columns, the one formed of the infantry and the other of the artillery and the train. Some way or other, both columns reached one point of crossing. On account of this, and also because General Churin's brigade was drawn up at the crossing on the opposite bank, thus impeding the movement, confusion arose and some disorder ensued. It was difficult to cross over on the ice; it broke under the artillery and heavy wagons, and the crossing was effected with great difficulty, the infantry remaining under arms throughout the entire night.

Part of the wounded remained in Davanganpoo. General Myloff ordered the sanitary transports to go at a trot to Davanganpoo for the wounded, and almost all of them were luckily brought over; however, many of those who could not get into the ambulances walked all night with great difficulty until they reached the railway line (the coaling branch), by which they were transported to Mukden. Stores of provisions and other supplies were partly burnt and partly abandoned. This fate fell to the share of the entire Decaville Railway net, established for the serv-

ice of our positions. Lastly the troops of the Second Army Corps crossed over to the right bank, and the troops of the Third Army were located between the Khunkhe and the Shakhe. Here began the fractioning of the large units. Foreseeing that the trains could only impede the movements of the troops, the commanders of the 10th and 8th Army Corps sent them to the north towards Telin, and, thanks to this disposition, these trains were the only ones saved. In the morning of February 18th a fight began near the village of Salinpoo, and continued until evening. We could not withstand the attack of the enemy, and retreated.

February 19th.—The troops of the Second Army occupied the positions Madiapoo-Youkhuantun-Fansintun-Padiaza. The units were all mixed up, but not accidentally; this took place by special order. Thus the 8th and the mixed Rifles Corps detachments were to be found everywhere. It was quiet on that day on the front west of Mukden. We put the troops in order and occupied positions, while the Japanese were reinforcing their front at this point. The hostile column marched along the road from Sinmintin to the village of Tashichao. The 1st Siberian Corps, which had been sent to the left flank, was again called back, and was thus obliged to make again a forced march of 60 *versts* without taking any rest. The enemy occupied towards dawn the village of Soukhoudiapoo, on the left bank of the Khunkhe, and later the village of Lanshanpoo, so that the front of the Third Army was somewhat shifted to the east (Madiapoo -Khoudiapoo -Eltgazooza -Tasoudiapoo -Lanshanpoo-Sakhepoo). To the north of the river Khunkhe no encounters took place to-day. The guard detachments of the hostile turning column were detected some 8 to 9 *versts* west of the Mukden station, opposite the village of Youkhuantun.

February 20th.—The 1st Siberian Corps has arrived from the left flank. The men are very tired. The Japanese have taken the offensive in the rayon Madiapoo-Oulinpoo-Yasytun on a front

some 5 to 6 *versts* in extension; all their three stubborn attacks were repulsed. General Tserpitski, commanding the troops at this point, reported that three Japanese divisions were operating against him; I think that this is exaggerated, although it would be very important for the Japanese to break through the Russian lines at this point, for then they could cut our army in two; it is therefore possible that large forces have been directed to this locality. Our troops have occupied the village of Newsytun, also Tintiantun and Igsytay after an insignificant fight. On the left bank of the Khunkhe the enemy pressed hard on the village of Elthaytze, but all his seven attacks were repulsed towards evening with great losses. The villages of P'adiaza and Paodaotun were occupied by us in the evening after a fight for them. North of the Khunkhe our troops were not very active either yesterday or to-day; if we except the repulsed attacks in the rayon of Madiapoo-Yasytun, there were no fights whatever. The reason for this inaction lay in the necessity of finding out the distribution of the units. But did this necessitate so much time? Was everything done to ascertain the disposition of the troops in the shortest time possible? Was not the cause of such slowness in the proceedings to be found in the self-love of a chief or institution? At any rate, this two days' inactivity on the front west of Mukden, when the enemy was still weak, had most fatal consequences. Towards evening our troops occupied the following positions on the western front: General Tserpitski, with 34 battalions, from Madiapoo to Youkhuantun; further, General Topornin, with 16 battalions, as far as the Sinmintin road; further still, General Gerngross, with 49 battalions; then came small detachments under Colonels Zapolski and Tsiekhanovich, General Bürger, who had returned from under Sinmintin, and Colonel Bolkhovitinoff. General Hanenfeld commanded the reserve of 4 battalions. There were in all on that front about 120 battalions and from 400 to 450 guns. These troops occupied the following positions: Madiapoo-Pulinpoo-Yasytun, Youkhuantun,

Newsyntun, Tintiantun, Igsytay, Fansytun, Padiaza, Paodaotun, Santayze.

February 21st.—The Japanese stubbornly attacked our positions in the vicinity of Oulinpoo-Yasytun; they wanted at any cost to drive us out, for if they should succeed here, it would be easy for them to reach the railway line and, seizing the crossing over the Khunkhe, cut off the retreat of our Third Army. Our troops often allowed the attacking detachment to approach within 200 to 100 paces and then opened a concentrated fire against them, and the enemy retreated, leaving literally heaps of corpses behind him. During that time the troops of General Gerngross continued successfully their retreat; they advanced in the rayon of the Sinmintin road and, after a stubborn fight, occupied Tsuanvanche, situated some 4 *versts* from Tashichao, the occupation of which was their principal aim. His Majesty's 1st Siberian Regiment was operating here.

The ranks are thinning. The losses are great, the men are tired, exhausted, having achieved a forced march of 60 *versts* immediately before the fight. The commander of the regiment feels that he is unable to take this important point; the enemy will try to keep it at any cost. In answer to his request for reinforcements, Colonel Lösch receives the following answer: "The commander of the troops is dissatisfied with your procrastination." Night came and Tashichao was not taken. The commander of the regiment was unable to order a night attack. The soldiers fell and went off to sleep while marching. During the night the enemy increased his forces, so that on the following day it was found impossible to take the village, not only with the 1st Siberian Regiment, but even with greatly increased forces.

Early in the morning hundreds of guns began to roar and thousands of men advanced against each other. The desperate attacks of the Japanese were sucessfully repulsed by our troops. The course of the retreat was strewn with corpses. Whole mounds of dead bodies rose in front of the entrenchments. Our

opposition increased the stubbornness of the Japanese and one attack was followed by another, each one more fierce than the other. The results remained the same: they did not succeed in breaking us.

The Japanese wanted at any cost to take possession of the village situated some 6 to 7 *versts* from the Mukden station. After having suffered enormous losses, they at last succeeded in taking it. But the point was too important to be left in the hands of the enemy, and our troops reconquered it by a desperate counter-attack. The enemy, strengthened by reinforcements, again took possession of it and the village passed four times from the hands of the one into those of the other. Lastly the commander of the corps, General Tserpitski, led an entire regiment into the attack for the purpose of maintaining this point in our hands. What a magnificent picture! The band playing, the banners waving, the regiment went into battle, its commander in the lead. Drawing themselves up to their full height, seeming to be still taller than in reality, the soldiers advanced bravely as if on parade, scorning all danger. The front ranks fell, others took their place. It seemed that nothing could withstand this Titanic onslaught. And, in reality, the enemy did not hold out, and fled, covering the field with corpses in his retreat. The village remained in our hands, and the enemy no more endeavored to take it from us. It is difficult to imagine a more terrible and at the same time a more majestic picture than this battle. The impassibility and courage of our troops were simply astounding.

The occupied village presented a fearful aspect. The streets, the courtyards, the *fanzas* were filled with the dead and wounded. It was impossible to take a step without touching a human body. Four times was the village occupied by the enemy and by us, and the corpses lay in strata. The aspect of the wounds was dreadful—each time the fight ended with bayonet thrusts. The *fanzas* were filled with wounded, who were

capable of crawling from under the corpses piled above them. There were Japanese and our men, but now they were no more enemies—a common fate made them feel near to each other, and they lay down side by side, helping each other to dress in some way their bleeding and mutilated limbs. Where had disappeared the anger, the hatred, and the desire to destroy each other? The area west of the village was strewn with Japanese corpses, while to the east it was covered with the bodies of our men—*i. e.*, on the side from which each attacked and retreated.

I think that not less than 3,000 to 4,000 men laid down their lives on both sides for the possession of this village. Such affairs may be counted by the score in the present war.

And the fight of the Zaraysk Regiment? The enemy attacked with large forces the village occupied by this regiment. The Japanese opened fire, but it was not answered; without ceasing to fire, they advanced, without meeting with any opposition. They knew by experience that the Russians did not leave their positions without giving fight, and that each of their successes has been dearly paid. There remained only some 150 paces to the village when a volley was fired; the front ranks fell and their places were taken by others, but they met with a similar fate; the third and fourth ranks laid down in rear of their dead and wanted to silence the fire of the Zaraysk men by a deadly shower of bullets, but could not withstand their well-aimed firing, and ran, though few of them reached their positions. The corpses in this affair formed literally large hills. It looked from a distance as if heaps of goods had been piled on a large area. Heart-rending cries sounded from these mounds of human bodies, while to the west there extended a ribbon of other corpses, thickly strewn in the beginning and growing thinner as it receded into the distance. It was sickening to gaze at all these horrors, all these dead bodies, of which breastworks were made, putting them transversally, some hundreds of *sajens* in extension, for the purpose of hurling death at the living from behind those dead ones. And the moans rising

from these mounds of human bodies! Cries of despair rang out from the tortured soul: "It is enough! For God's sake, enough of this slaughter! Stop! You are not beasts; you are men, belonging to civilized nations!" But this human invocation died unheeded, drowned by the cries of "Hurrah!" and "Banzai!" The feeling of humanity was crushed by practical considerations, the interests of the country being on the first plan, and not the destruction of these hundreds of thousands of men. The grateful descendants will live over their tombs a better life, will mourn for them, and the monuments erected in their honor will remain as an eternal remembrance of their glorious death.

Yet, while fully conscious of these horrors, fully conscious that, according to God's law, no one has the right to kill, one cannot help admiring the actions of these heroes, dealing deadly blows to their enemies. Such is the remarkable constitution of human nature.

And the attacks of the 1st Siberian Regiment? Oh, what troops! They are capable of carrying away the most cold-blooded man. They seemed not to see the enemy before them, not to feel their deadly machine-gun fire, not to notice the continuous flight of the heated metal. They did their duty as if on parade before their chief. I was accompanied by a correspondent of an American paper, the Chicago *Daily News,* who had been present as a correspondent at all the wars of the latter time, and he said to me and wrote to his paper that he had never witnessed anything like it, and that such pictures could be seen only once in a lifetime.

There would be no end to the description of the heroic deeds of our troops.

That day belonged to the Russians, as was communicated by that correspondent to his paper.

February 22d.—The Japanese are fiercely attacking from early morning our positions at Yansintun-Youkhuantun, but, having suffered great losses, towards 10 a. m. they desisted from

further attacks. Feeling probably that they could not break through into the rayon Madiapoo-Yansintun, they tried during the day to attack the village of Youkhuantun, proposing to move afterwards to the Mukden station along a road on which there is not a single village up to the very station. The enemy succeeded in taking this village. We were threatened by great danger and the corps commander himself led the regiment (the Minsk, I believe) into the battle. The enemy was repulsed. The Japanese made likewise energetic attacks in the Tashichao rayon and north of it. Here we retreated, abandoning the villages of Tsuanvanche, Padiaza, and Paodiatan, north of the Imperial Tombs, and which we had occupied yesterday. It was felt that the enemy was increasing his strength in that direction, endeavoring to occupy the railway line, so as to cut off our way of retreat. The enemy approached the railway, and at a distance of 4 *versts* from it began to fire at the passing trains. The telegraph was damaged one time. It was repaired under fire by the railway employees under the supervision of Controller Preobrajenski. It was necessary to have recourse to extraordinary measures for the driving back of the enemy. For this purpose the Orsk and Orovaysk Regiments, supported by two battalions of the Insar Regiment, advanced under command of Colonel Borisoff and occupied the village of Siaotuza. At that time the enemy was discovered north of that point some 10 *versts* from the railway off the Youshitay station. In that direction our cavalry detachment had intercepted yesterday the enemy, probably his advanced posts, and thrown them back. Great fatigue is noticed. It is the fourth day that a continuous battle is being waged in the neighborhood of Mukden.

February 23d.—The enemy was pressing hard on that day in the rayon Padiaza-Paodaotun-Tkhenitun. We were somewhat driven back here and occupied the following positions: Youkhuantun - Sandiafir - Khoükha - Sakhedza - Takhetun - Saytadze - Siaogoüza - Tsuertun. General Myloff was invested with

the command of Colonel Borisoff's troops, which were to be reinforced by the division of General Artamonoff and General Herschelmann with 6 battalions, thus making a total of 25 battalions. Colonel Borisoff occupied the villages of Tunchandza and Kusantun, but at this point he was fired at in the flank from the village of Tkhenitun. As yesterday's attack of the enemy against Youkhuantun, which cost him great losses, remained resultless, he again rushed to-day against the village of Newsintun, but the same fate awaited these attacks. Our troops, pursuing the enemy, took the offensive and made many prisoners.

The First and Third Armies retreated on the positions situated on the left bank of the Khunkhe; the retreat went off without any encounters. Some of the units set fire to their stores before moving, and thus disclosed prematurely their retreat.

February 24th.—A strong typhoon was raging to-day. Everything was covered with a compact cloud of dust of enormous dimensions, penetrating everywhere and into everything, driven by a fierce gale. The dust fills the ears, eyes, nose, and mouth; it is difficult to breathe and impossible to see—nothing can be made out at a distance of a few paces. A thick layer of dust covers the men occupying the trenches. An evil fate is pursuing us. Notwithstanding this, our troops recaptured the village of Sataydze, which the enemy had taken from us. The enemy wanted to capture at any price the railway at this point, but our troops repulsed all their attacks with stubborn resistance. General Myloff took the offensive: Colonel Borisoff was to take Gosytun and General Herschelmann was to take Khenitun. The attack was designated to begin at 11:30 a. m., as otherwise the enemy might take the offensive. General Launitz, commanding the troops in the rayon Khoükha-Takhetun-Santaydze, was not able to assist General Myloff, the enemy fiercely attacking him, endeavoring to break through his ranks at any cost. At this time the Commander-in-chief arrived for the purpose of personally directing the troops towards Tkhenitun, expressed to General Myloff

his dissatisfaction at the premature attack, made without any orders from him, and rode further to the north. Colonel Borisoff occupied Gosytun and fell mortally wounded in the fight. In spite of his stubborn attacks, General Herschelmann did not succeed in taking Tkhenitun, as this point was occupied by an entire hostile division, but succeeded in arresting the advance of the enemy. Kuropatkin arrived here about 2 p. m., and, having investigated the condition of affairs, approved of General Myloff's decision, admitting that the operation undertaken by him was timely. The Japanese concentrated large forces in this locality and continued their movement to the north.

Towards evening the enemy broke through in the vicinity of Kiousan. It was ascertained at the same time that a detachmen of Japanese occupied the village of Tasintun, situated some 10 *versts* northwest of the Khushitay station. It was found impossible to oppose large forces to the enemy at Khushitay. The breaking through of the center by the Japanese was not found as important as supposed, as the enemy's forces were not considerable at this point. Order was given for all the troops to retreat to Telin. General Myloff was ordered to maintain the positions occupied by him, and to repulse the attacks of the enemy until the Second and Third Armies reached their destination. The retreat of the three armies began in the night of February 24th and 25th.

February 25th.—On the eve of this day Kuropatkin told General Myloff that he would send a brigade to occupy the village of Tava on the Mandarin Road, to keep the Japanese from taking the rear guard in the rear. But this morning the Japanese began to fire against Tsuertun from the west and east, and it was found out that no brigade had been sent to Tava. It was necessary to maintain the positions at any cost, as far from all the troops had marched by and the rear guard, counting 25 battalions in all, whose ranks had been considerably thinned already, had to fight on two fronts. General Kaulbars rode by in the

evening, and repeated the Commander-in-chief's order to keep the positions until all the troops had passed, until General Launitz had marched by with his detachment. It was absolutely above human endurance to stand the cross-fire of the enemy. The chief of Staff, General Martoss, endeavored to arrest several retreating battalions, but they did not obey him. General Kaulbars arrived and forced them to submit. A few new battalions brought into the fire helped to drive the enemy back and the narrow passage fired at by the enemy grew somewhat wider. If these new battalions had not been brought into action, the rear guard would have been surrounded by the Japanese and destroyed. The Staff thought that if the rear guard, commanded by General Myloff, would succeed in protecting the march past of all our troops, it could not avoid destruction. The troops kept up bravely, fully conscious of the importance of the problem laid upon them, but there were very trying moments for the commanders. For example, at the time that General Launitz's troops were retreating from the southwest, several units passing through the chains of sharpshooters of the rear guard carried away in the general retreating movement the men forming the chain. Due praise must be given General Myloff for his courageous and skillful arrest of large hostile forces until all our troops, including the artillery and train, had passed. It is difficult to credit that a handful of men, as compared to the forces of the enemy, could arrest the advancing Japanese army. In addition to this, General Myloff was often forced to restore order in the retreating troops, by calling upon the chiefs of the units.

The remnant of the Modlin Regiment, about 1 battalion, occupied the woods around the Imperial Tombs, probably making up the reserve. The order to retreat was forgotten to be given to these men. While passing onward some of the retreating soldiers came upon the wood, many men of various units thus gathering there. Seeing there an entire unit, they halted. Suddenly the enemy began to fire at them from all sides—they were sur-

rounded. The field officers were all killed, and there remained only two captains—Ivanoff and another, whose name I do not remember. The soldiers who did not belong to the Modlin Regiment began to grow excited; the Japanese demanded their surrender. I do not know in what way two more banners were found here in addition to the standard of the Modlin Regiment. All were saved, thanks to the heroic deed of Captain Ivanoff. He pushed through the soldiers and cried: "I am the commander of the Modlin Regiment; all must obey me." (He wore a jacket without any shoulder-straps, and consequently his rank could not be determined.) Seeing that the Modlin men obeyed him, the soldiers of the other regiments likewise gathered around him. When all were assembled and distributed, Ivanoff took the icon he was wearing on his chest under his clothes, and, holding it in one hand, raised his sword high with the other, and crying, "Follow me, brethren!" rushed forward. Inspired by his example, the soldiers made a bayonet attack and repulsed the enemy, breaking through their ranks and saving all the banners. Many fell in this heroic fight. May God rest their souls! It seems to me that Captain Ivanoff has been presented for the St. George.

In the night, when the troops had finished passing by, the rear guard abandoned its positions and began to retreat along the railway. The soldiers marched singing. According to the disposition, the troops had to halt on the river Pukhe at the point where it crossed the railway, here to arrest the advance of the enemy should he come up to this place before all our troops had gone to a certain distance. At one place the road was found obstructed or, rather, covered with men, who impeded the march of the artillery and train. On the road and on both sides of it men lay in a dense mass; fires were burning everywhere. Several regiments were found here, whose men were incapable of moving on out of sheer fatigue. General Myloff quickly assembled the chiefs of these troops, gave orders first of all to extinguish the fires, which could attract the enemy, explained the

condition of affairs, and ordered to rise immediately and march on for at least 10 *versts*. With a heavy heart did the chiefs assemble their men and move on.

General Myloff received on the road the order of the commander of the Second Army to draw up a disposition for the occupation of the following position, according to which the right flank on the left bank of the Pukhe was to be occupied by General Artamonoff, while the center and left flank were to be commanded by General Herschelmann.

The train moved and the artillery rattled in rear of the marching troops. From time to time a gun or a wagon was overturned and arrested the movement of the troops. Time passed, and by morning the new positions had to be occupied so as to arrest the pursuing enemy.

Confusion took place at the crossing of the Pukhe: everyone desired to be the first to get to the other bank; the banks were steep, and the two existing roads did not allow of a rapid crossing over of the entire train, the artillery and the men. The chief of the rear guard ordered new passages to be made, and, thanks to these, the crossing was soon effected.

February 26th.—According to the disposition, the rear guard occupied in the morning positions on the left bank of the Pukhe. The enemy soon reached this point and opened artillery and rifle fire. A turning movement was feared, as the Japanese were both on the right and the left north of the rear-guard position. It is necessary to mention here a painful incident: General Artamonoff, who occupied the right flank, without breathing a word to anybody, retreated north to Telin. It was necessary to distribute hastily among the remaining troops the positions abandoned by General Artamonoff.

During the night the rear guard continued its retreat and reached the station of Saytadze. One of Artamonoff's brigades was caught up with here, the brigade of General Petereff; the other, commanded by Artamonoff himself, had gone to Telin.

General Kaulbars, who was at that time at the station, reproved General Petereff and ordered him and General Churinoff's brigade to remain in the rear guard, relieving General Myloff and General Herschelmann and their troops, exhausted by continuous fights and marches during four days, throughout which the men had hardly slept at all. General Myloff, whose hernia, already once operated upon, had been aggravated by a fall he had with his horse, was in a serious condition on account of physical and mental strain. General Kaulbars remained for some time personally with the rear guard. General Myloff's detachment was leaving the Saytadze station when the Japanese occupied the village of Iloo, situated on the Mandarin Road north of this station, some 3 or 4 *versts* east of the railway line.

February 27th.—The detachment which was in the rear guard, upon reaching the river Fankhe, found at the crossing troops, trains, and artillery which assembled here, and new passages had again to be made. The sapper battalion, which was here quite accidentally, worked most energetically. The crossing was quickly effected.

General Kaulbars moved slowly to the north with the rear-guard, unmolested by the enemy.

February 28th.—The rear guard occupied a position on the river Fankhe. The troops of the First Army occupied the positions on the left flank; General Mischenko, who had not yet recovered from his wound, took the command of his detachment and occupied the right flank.

March 1st.—The enemy began to advance against Fankhe, but was repulsed with great losses. Our troops took the offensive and began to press upon him, walking over hundreds of hostile corpses. Our further advance was checked by reinforcements which reached the enemy. Slowly and in excellent order our troops began to retreat towards Telin.

In the night of the 25th our troops began to approach Telin. They neared it in groups, wherein the men of various units were

mixed up, combatants as well as non-combatants, and occupied the valley. As they arrived without officers, they could not get provisions. I do not understand why it was supposed that, since the men had arrived all in a jumble, they could be left hungry. This circumstance was greatly the cause of disorders at Telin. It brought about marauding and robbing of stores. However, the disorders were not on a grand scale and were soon quenched, although several soldiers were shot down by their officers for disobedience. Some of the men, feeling guilty, proceeded further to the north, taking along with them many absolutely innocent ones. The minds of the soldiers were in an excited condition and they could not clearly define the reason why and whereto they were going. Having left their units, they remained without food and hunger forced them to get it by violence. It is possible that some of them took other things in addition to provisions, but these, as a useless burden, were soon cast aside. Those that had gone north of Telin aggregated not more than 3,000 to 4,000 men.

The chiefs at last began to evolve order out of this mixed-up mass of wandering soldiers and distribute them among their original units. There were in all about 20,000 of them. By the 1st of March there was not a soul at Telin, and even the railway depot was deserted. All was cleared and the troops were located where they belonged. Of course it can not be said that order was entirely restored. It is far easier to break it than to reëstablish it. Many days passed before everything could be brought to its normal condition, so much the more as it had to be done while continuing to retreat.

I was convinced by my conversations with several generals that order could be restored very rapidly by taking the offensive. This would so startle the enemy that he would be sure to retrace his steps. Our troops were undoubtedly capable of taking the offensive, but, alas! there was a lack of ammunition, especially of artillery projectiles.

Under such conditions it was impossible to remain in the Telin positions, and our troops retreated further to the north, halting at the positions situated in the vicinity of the station of Sipingay, some 174 *versts* distant from Mukden and 332 from Kharbin.

What did the Mukden disaster, screamed about in the foreign press and commented on in our own, consist in? It is true that morally we suffered defeat. We lost our prestige in the eyes of the Chinese and the nations, who desire to see a disaster in our most insignificant non-success, magnifying it until it reached the dimensions of a catastrophe, so as to find a momentary consolation in the fact; we have lost our prestige in the eyes of our weak-souled friends and also in the eyes of our still more weak-souled citizens, who do not wish and, may be, do not know how to see clearly into the existing condition of affairs, as our Government spheres take generally little care to acquaint the public with it, and in this case did not lift a finger to help it to find out the truth. This contempt of public opinion is not timely, as it is exploited extensively for their own purposes by all who need it. We have suffered smaller losses in men than our victors. The loss of some 30 to 40 guns, several wagons, and from three to four milllions' worth of stores is not so great a thing as to call it a disaster.

It is true that we could not take advantage of the Telin positions, deemed by specialists far stronger than those we occupied on the Shakhe. But from a strategic point of view I do not think that we have lost much. Our present situation is better than the one before Mukden. Our right flank is open (an uninhabited desert extends in front of it), so that we can see every movement of the enemy and can calculate his strength more accurately than at Mukden, in the numerous villages surrounded by clay walls. The left flank is in a mountainous region, easily defended with a comparatively small force. The thinned ranks have been filled again and there remains a surplus for further casualties.

All the rumors concerning our disaster emanated from prejudiced accounts of our mode of retreat. A painful incident which took place in the train served as a basis for these accounts. Such a prejudiced view acted upon the already nervous public and engendered an exaggerated pessimistic feeling. Such was this painful episode.

Chapter VII.

THE PANIC IN THE TRAIN.

General Kuropatkin, as I have already said, left on February 24th for the northern front, for the purpose of directing the operations in person. It was already felt at that time that the moment to give a decisive blow to the enemy had passed, and that nothing was left but to prepare for retreat and use all means to maintain order during that retreat. It is said that for that purpose the Commander-in-chief ordered on the morning of February 24th one of his immediate assistants to begin sending the trains to the north, the train of the Commander-in-chief, of the Staff, and of the quartermaster to start first. (According to the rule, this train must always be at a distance of one day's march from the headquarters. In this case this rule was not observed.) But as soon as the Commander-in-chief had left, this assistant's young wife came to see him, their interviews taking place at rare intervals, as, according to General Kuropatkin's orders, the presence of his subordinate officers' wives was absolutely forbidden, even for a short time, in his train and in the train of his chief of Staff. Abnormal, unnatural sensations have a pleasant effect upon the nerves of the mentally distorted twentieth-century man. It may be that in the case under consideration the interview with his wife within the sound of the roar of guns and the moans of thousands of the best sons of his country, falling under the enemy's blows, at the moment when the fate of the war was being decided, produced some special sensation, awakening extraordinary ecstasies and making him forget his duty. By some accident the train in which he was had no telephone connection in that critical moment. Only towards evening did the news arrive reporting the breaking through of our center by the Jap-

anese, threatening the occupation of Mukden station from minute to minute, and only at 8 p. m. were orders given for the train to retreat to the north by the great Mandarin Road. The train of the Commander-in-chief and of the quartermaster started after 11 p. m. on February 24th, when at that time they ought to have been near Telin, and these were those that suffered most.

In order to get to the Mandarin Road, by which the trains had to retreat, it was necessary to traverse Mukden or to make a circuit of some 12 *versts*. To traverse Mukden, especially in the night, was impossible. Thus the train started. It is difficult to conceive how enormous this train was in dimensions and how fearful in unwieldiness. It extended for about 60 to 70 *versts* in one continuous ribbon of several rows. Artillery and artillery parks were added to it, as the artillery was not to take part in rear-guard battles; carts loaded with the property of the Chinese Bank and its employees and of private citizens who left with the officials came likewise along. The presence of these elements, foreign to the troops, in no way contributed to the maintenance of order on the march. Whenever one cart stopped, the whole caravan was arrested; some time elapsed before the cart was put in motion, those in the rear, especially the artillery, which admits of no obstacles, pressed on, and the disorder increased.

Only at dawn of day did the head of the train emerge on the Mandarin Road. As the train advanced various non-combatant units joined it, as bakers, Intendancy detachments, and others. In some of the units the wagons looked like those loads which the inhabitants of the capital see when moving to and from the country: tables, stools, various household chattels, all that the thrifty striker did not wish to leave behind so as not to deprive his officer of comfort, possible in the field, was piled in these wagons. When the main part of the train was between Tava and Pukhe, there appeared on the summit of one of the hills several hostile mountain guns and, maybe, a squadron or two of

cavalry, evidently part of the troops which broke through our ranks near Kiuzan, and, coming up to this point, opened fire against the retreating train. The shrapnel screeched and the grenades hissed. One of these *shimosas* fell and exploded in the midst of the train, overthrowing several carts and killing and wounding several men and horses; there again a shrapnel burst, killing several men and beasts. The horses went mad and kicked and reared, the wagons crowded upon each other and turned over, cries and moans were heard, and the confusion was indescribable. Each and every one endeavored to get out of the danger zone, and the general chaos and disorder increased. The noncombatant units, absolutely devoid of initiative, without leadership, were incapable of doing anything, and the disorder was increased by the presence of foreign elements, such as Chinese drivers with their *arbas* and wagons. All these were screaming and crazily rushing to and fro, while the shrapnel continued to burst overhead, and the *shimosas* continually fell to the ground, vomiting columns of black, stifling smoke. The train servants, unaccustomed to fire, lost their heads, and in their fear looked for safety wherever they could. Some of them rushed into the fields and madly jumped over the rows of *ghiaolan;* some were wedged in the lines of the train, and endeavored to unharness a horse, so as to flee likewise into the fields. The gunners and men of the artillery parks, though they all had already seen fights, influenced by the general panic, followed their example; the parks and guns were abandoned, and sometimes a gun, pulled out of the line, was careering at full gallop, overturning everything which lay in its way. Fortunately, the hostile fire was soon exhausted (it was found out later that there was an insufficient number of projectiles) and comparative order was gradually restored. However, it was impossible to gather up the abandoned property, for the men who had unharnessed the horses had galloped far away.

It is not known where Colonel Timofeyeff, of the General Staff, came from. Seeing the insignificance of the enemy's forces,

and thinking that it would be easy to capture even his guns, wishing in general to restore order, especially necessary in case of a repetition of a sudden attack, he rode up to some units and endeavored to stop them. The men were all in sheepskin overcoats, and it was difficult to make out if they were combatants or non-combatants, so much the more as the latter likewise wore arms, though these were only a useless burden to them. Notwithstanding all his efforts, his remonstrances had no effect. He then drew his revolver and made two shots, probably against those who answered him most impudently. They fell and their comrades fired at the Colonel. Hit by several bullets, he fell severely wounded. The men fled and every trace of them disappeared, probably forever. Justice will surely not find them, and what sense would there be in punishing them? Remorse, which each of them must have felt as soon as the first fits of panic had left them, will be a heavy enough burden for them to carry.

At the time that all flew, seized by unconscious fear, that one cart overturned the other, that one man trampled the other under foot, thinking only of his own salvation, one strange vehicle arrested the eye. Drawn by one horse, a soldier sitting on the box, it advanced evenly, slowly, as if no fearful confusion and disorder reigned around it, as if nothing of what was going on mattered at all. A gun, drawn by six horses, came rushing on furiously, and it seemed that one moment more and it would reach the vehicle and smash it like so many others; but, when only at a few paces from that vehicle, the six frenzied horses swerved suddenly to the side, skillfully passing it, and rushed furiously on.

What vehicle was it? Why was everyone afraid to come upon it? The soldier, dazed by grief, carried in this vehicle his company commander, dearly loved by his entire command. It was an exemplary officer, a chief loving his men and taking excellent care of them, standing up for their interests. The entire

company simply worshiped him. He died a hero's death on the field of battle, and his faithful striker, who always took as tender care of him as a nurse, was carrying his body along. His entire love and devotion was now transferred to his commander's wife, who was traveling with him on that same vehicle. From time to time he turned round and gazed with sorrowful, pitying eyes into her distracted face. With dishevelled hair, eyes filled with terror, this young, pretty woman was looking at the corpse of the dearly loved husband who represented to her all the joy of life. She, probably, did no more understand the drama taking place around the beloved man, did not comprehend whereto and why he was being taken. The striker was looking at her and big tears were running fast over his dusty face, leaving dirty furrows behind, which the fine dust that pervaded the air covered again with a new thick layer.

Tormented by some sort of foreboding, the unhappy woman proceeded to the positions on that fatal night. She found with difficulty her husband's company, and began questioning the soldiers. Silence answered her. A fearful thought struck her like lightning, and she broke into a fearful, terror-striking laugh, which soon changed into sobs. The whole company then broke into sobs. "Come, lady dear," begged the striker, tears rolling down his face, and both went to the field of battle. The pale dawn was feebly lighting the theater of the dreadful fight. The field was covered with corpses; one was lying with outstretched hands as if endeavoring to catch somebody, another seemed to sleep quietly lying on his back stretched out to his full length, while a third one was sitting on his knees with his head bowed to the ground. What attitudes do not they take, these unhappy people, smitten by sudden death! Here and there were heard the moans of the wounded who had not been picked up through the night. The poor woman regained consciousness and hope was kindled anew in her heart. "He may be here wounded," she says to the striker, but the striker is silent; he knows that

his commander fell stricken unto death, and that his corpse, taken aside by the soldiers, is near at hand. Obeying an unconscious impulse, the poor woman walked briskly to the fatal spot. There he lies as in life—only a small spot mars his forehead and a drop of coagulated blood stains its whiteness; he lies on his back, with one arm stretched out. She fell on the loved, lifeless form. Her head lay on his outstretched arm, and it seemed that they were both resting in quiet slumber. Silently did the striker stand, moved unto the depths of his soul by this spectacle. But she came back from her swoon, and in her despair began to shake her husband's body, as if to waken him from this fearful sleep.

When the soldiers had placed the body in the vehicle, nothing could induce her to leave it, and the striker was taking them both now to the north, to their country, without any thought as to when their journey would come to an end.

Would it not have been better for this unhappy woman to have stayed at home than to witness all these horrors of the war? Of what help could she be to her husband? Seeing all these terrors before her, she uselessly deranged her mind, and it may be that during her whole life she will not be able to rid herself of this morbid condition.

Order was at last more or less restored, and the train proceeded onward. The greater part of the abandoned guns were taken along, but some of them had fallen into ravines in the confusion, and it was an utter impossibility to pull them out. It was likewise necessary to abandon part of the vehicles, as no horses could be found to take the place of the killed ones and of those that had galloped away. But, in order that the effects should not be lost, the soldiers began to open the trunks and take all that it was possible to carry to the other vehicles. All that could not be carried along was thrown on the road. The whole area occupied by the train looked as if some catastrophe had taken place: it was strewn with linen, various articles, paper, broken and overturned carts.

Along each side of the railway were retreating troops which had not taken part in the rear-guard fights. Telin was designated as the assembling-point. The men, dirty, dusty, their fur caps covered with gray cloth, so as not to be conspicuous in battle, and looking like monks' cowls, had a weary, unprepossessing aspect. They marched along with their officers in good order, and had 50 *versts* more to walk. They were looking with envy at the trains, carrying the wounded, which passed them by. But some of the bolder ones at the sidings, where the trains stop, jumped on to the platforms of the cars; they were followed by others, and soon all the platforms, the roofs of the cars, the footboards, the tenders, and even the locomotives were covered with men. The officers called to them, trying to stop them, but seeing that it was of no avail, dismissed them with a wave of their hands. The railway *personnel* treated likewise with great indulgence these unexpected passengers, fully comprehending what fatigue meant, and the trains proceeded on their way slowly, so as not to make any of the soldiers, hanging on to it in all kinds of ways, fall off.

The trains followed each other in a continuous chain and were in a like way covered with soldiers. The units were broken. The soldiers were separated from their officers. The ranks of the remaining ones were also broken and the retreat was continued in disorder.

In the evening of February 28th I went with Colonel Obolesheff, the Engineer officer Mikhaylovski, one of the surgeons, and "the granddaddy of General Mischenko," the Montenegrin Plamenatz, to gather up the wounded along the line. The platform of the Santayzy station was covered with wounded, some of which had not yet been attended to. One of the flying detachments (the St. Petersburg one, I believe) began to dress the wounds at the station, and we carried the wounded into the cars which had come with us.

The sun had set and night was advancing fast. In the field,

not far from the station, noises were heard—talking and the neighing of horses; it was the train which had halted for a rest. Vehicles, parks, guns, and trains with wounded and men, covering the platforms and roofs of the cars, continued to arrive. A volley was fired somewhere. Cries were heard: "The Japanese! the Japanese cavalry!" Everything was confusion. The cries of the people intermingled with the neighs of horses and the rattle of overturned vehicles, rifle fire opened on all sides. Everyone who had a rifle fired without heed of the target. Moans, the howling of thousands of men, the patter of rifle fire was heard on all sides. The commandant, who had evidently received orders, in case of the arrival of the Japanese, to burn the stores, thinking that the enemy was close, ordered to set them on fire, and soon an enormous conflagration illuminated the awful spectacle of death met at the hands of our own brother soldiers. Past the platform rushed the artillery, overturning everything in its course; men, horses, all fled panic-stricken.

Two or three bolder ones stood up on the platform, trying to arrest the fugitives. "Stop! stop! there are no Japanese." The men, stopping for a moment, but disbelieving the communication, rushed on still more rapidly, while bullets were hurtling by, striking the walls of the station, and here and there the moans of the wounded were heard.

At last the rifle fire began to slacken, and gradually everything grew quiet. Many left the station buildings with shamed faces.

"I am the chief of defense of this station," screamed a colonel, who had come up from I know not where.

On that night General Kuropatkin slept in a freight car at that station. During the few days that I had not seen him, he had greatly changed and grown pale, while his eyes shone feverishly bright.

It is difficult, of course, to justify such a disorderly retreat, but too much severity ought not to be shown these men. Con-

sider their mental condition, analyze their psychology, and you will understand much that seems incomprehensible. Remember that these are the same men who yesterday and the day before repulsed the attacks of the enemy with such courage, such wonderful steadfastness, and stormed the hostile fortifications. They fought twelve days consecutively, inflicting enormous losses on the enemy. For twelve days they bore courageously hunger and cold (for in battle it is difficult to supply all the units), and not a word of murmur ran through the ranks. Each unit did its duty, not knowing the general trend of the operation, seeing only the results obtained by itself. Each of them had to its account a series of heroically repulsed attacks. And suddenly in the very heat of battle the order to retreat reaches the positions, a painful order, oft repeated during the course of this war. All recalled the recent incident with General Grippenberg, his departure, seemingly for the reason that the Commander-in-chief had ordered to retreat when it was necessary to continue the fight in order to vanquish the enemy, and rumors as to his reception in St. Petersburg. "The chiefs are quarrelling, and we must perish on account of their quarrels. Are we food for the guns?" Such were the words heard among the troops. Is it much to be wondered at that under such conditions the men did not understand the order, that murmurs were heard, that faith in their chief was shaken, and that the discipline grew slack? The results are evident. But who has to bear the responsibility?

Not all the units reached the Mandarin Road, by which the retreat was to be effected: some were caught by the enemy, and retreated fighting where they could break through, over the mountainous region east of the railway line, and reached late their destination; many were taken prisoner, mostly the wounded ones. At the evacuation of Mukden, the soldiers were allowed to take from the stores provisions and other articles; for example, presents sent from Russia. But, unfortunately, some of the soldiers

fell upon spirits, became drunk, and lay down on the spot, incapable of moving; it is said that of such from 2,000 to 3,000 were taken prisoner.

The further retreat of our troops was effected in good order, slowly, without confusion, with small rear-guard fights of no consequence whatever.

Chapter VIII.

CHANGE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

On March 4th General Kuropatkin surrendered to General Linevich the command of all the land and naval forces operating against Japan, and left. The recall of Kuropatkin did not surprise anyone: everybody felt that there must be a change of Commander-in-chief, but no one knew by whom he would be replaced, and everybody expected the new chief with great anxiety. The appointment of Linevich, well acquainted with the troops and the mode of fighting of the Japanese, gave new courage to the Army and was received by all with great enthusiasm. Everybody knew that he was a courageous, resolute general and everybody was sure that he would be able to compel everyone to obedience.

Some persons assert that he is not a remarkable strategist. I know nothing about this; it may be that it is so and it may be not. There is no doubt, however, that he is a man endowed with the *divine spark* and much can be achieved by this. It may be that the "deep thinking" by which our strategists distinguish themselves is not at all necessary; it may be that simple actions inspired by that divine spark, are all that is needed, that is indispensable with the present remarkably developed military technique. The future will show who was right. All the dispositions taken by Linevich, as the Commander-in-chief of the armies, during the last days of my sojourn on the theater of war, were highly rational and communicated in a decisive tone, admitting of no controversies. This means a great deal and testifies to the mode of action adopted by the Commander-in-chief. May the Lord give him strength and health and may the divine spark, that will lead us to victory, perhaps, shine on undimmed!

Only by reason of the iron will of the Commander-in-chief was it possible to restore order so rapidly in the troops.

Some three days later, I believe, it was made known that General Kuropatkin had been appointed commander of the First Manchurian Army, and that this appointment had been made according to his personal request laid before the Emperor. This fact made a very good impression upon the Army. I was present when General Kuropatkin reported to General Linevich as a subordinate. With his hand at his visor, General Kuropatkin reported his arrival. General Linevich, likewise at military salute, listened with a concentrated expression on his face to the report of his former chief and now his subordinate. The two generals immediately entered upon their new *rôles*. How fate sometimes plays with the destinies of man!

Chapter IX.

OPERATIONS ON THE LEFT FLANK AND IN THE CENTER.

I have reported consecutively, according to the days of their taking place, the operations of our troops in the vicinity of Mukden—*i. e.*, on the fronts west and north of this city, without mentioning a word about the actions on the southern front—in the center and on the left flank. I did this for the purpose of giving the reader a general uninterrupted impression of the events which took place near Mukden, where the February drama was enacted, and which had such decisive influence upon the first period of the present campaign.

On the extreme left flank there operated the detachments of Mandrikin; further to the east, the troops of the Generals Masloff, Rennenkampf, Alexieff, and Daniloff; further still were the Siberian Corps. The forces of the enemy were very large and he began to press upon us.

It was already known by February 8th that the Japanese intended to take the offensive. The extreme advanced detachments of the enemy began to operate against our extreme left flank—the Tsynkhenchen detachment. During the two following days the advance grew more intense, while on the 11th and 12th of February the attacks were made with forces greatly superior in numbers to the Russians, and, notwithstanding our stubborn resistance and the great losses of the enemy, we were forced to retreat to our positions. Our troops left with great unwillingness the fortified points; the attacks ended in bayonet fights, the enemy retreated repeatedly, leaving hundreds of corpses behind, but again reinforced, rushed on anew. It was necessary to expel the officers by force from the occupied positions. On the

13th and 14th of February the Japanese made a stubborn attack against the entire front of our left flank. After fierce fighting, our troops left the positions of Dalin Pass. The results of the last days were such, in general, that, having left our former positions, we straightened out our front, pushing our left flank far to the south. The taking of Dalin Pass by the Japanese opened for them, so to say, the road to Fushun and Telin. But the army of Linevich, which had taken firm hold of this region, did not allow them to take one step forward.

Attacks and artillery fights took place daily in the center, but the result was always the same: they were all repulsed by us with enormous losses to the enemy. The Poutiloff and Novgorod Hills were fired at uninterruptedly from 11-inch guns. The valises, as the soldiers call the 11-inch projectiles, cut through the air with a fearful noise and their fragments, in the form of shapeless objects, produced a specially disagreeable hissing sound. These noises had a very exciting effect upon the nerves, precluding the possibility of ever getting used to them, forcing the men to be ever on the watch, and the soldiers had so well adapted themselves to the flight of these projectiles that the loss among them was insignificant. The fortifications, however, suffered greatly. On the 15th, 16th, and 17th the Japanese endeavored to break through our lines at any cost and at any point; all their efforts, however, were frustrated; though we too had to pay with an enormous number of victims, the enemy's losses were still greater. The hostile guard, counting 20,000 men, attacked the corps of General Zasulich, but all the attacks were repulsed. Thirteen attacks made within two days cost the enemy almost two-thirds of his contingent. General Zasulich here succeeded in taking his revenge upon the guard which defeated him under Turenchen.

It may be said that the Japanese understood already on the 18th-19th of February that they would not succeed in breaking through the line on the left flank and dislodge General Line-

vich's army, defending itself with such extraordinary stubbornness. The losses of the enemy were here so great that his army melted, so to say, before our eyes. Considering this affair as lost, the Japanese rushed first against the front, but at this point too all their efforts broke against the solidity of our defenders. Then they went further and fell upon our right flank.

On February 23d the army of General Linevich left the positions which it had defended with such obstinacy against the fierce onrush of the enemy. The losses on both sides amounted to from 50,000 to 60,000 (we lost, as the defense, about 21,000). On the 24th it occupied new positions on the Khunkhe River, but already on the 25th moved further to the north in the direction of Telin.

The retreat of this army took place in excellent order; it left not a vehicle nor a rifle as booty to the enemy, although here too some of the wagons looked like carts moving household goods to the country. It was told that General Rennenkampf, having halted, had a fire built and allowed the train to pass by him. One vehicle stopped; the tired horse was incapable of pulling it over the pass; the driver, not less fatigued than the animal, exerted all his strength to help it, but this did not improve matters. The vehicle, filled with all kinds of household articles, was exceedingly heavy.

"Whose things are these?" asked Rennenkampf of the driver.

"The company commander's, your excellency," answered he.

"Well, my friend, throw them into that fire."

The soldier looked with incredulity at the General. "How is it possible to throw the property of the company commander into the fire?" thinks he. How much pains had not he and the striker taken to gather it up and bring it to this point, not desiring to leave anything to the Japanese.

"That's all right, brother; throw them in. I will answer for them."

The goods are thrown into the fire and the horse goes on easily. Not a few of such vehicles met with the same fate.

It could be gathered from the actions of the Commander-in-chief that he supposed as early as February 17th that the blow would be struck against the left flank and that the turning movement of the enemy and his operations on the right flank were nothing but a big demonstration, as it would be impossible to explain otherwise the sending of the 1st Siberian Army Corps with one brigade to the left flank at the time when the turning column had not only been sighted, but had come in touch with our armies. It is evident that he feared that the Japanese, having taken possession of Dalin Pass and others and having here driven out our troops, would move against Fushun and further against Telin so as to take us in the rear. It is probable that such a plan existed among the Japanese, but the events which took place against their wishes forced them to adapt themselves to the circumstances according to their development: they altered their plan according to the course of events. It is possible that future events forced them to strike their principal blow, instead of the left flank against the right and end the operations at Mukden, perhaps with not so signal a success as when they could have executed their movement against Fushun-Telin. It is evident that it is difficult to tell now what the enemy proposed to do. This will be seen after the war if the Japanese are sincere. At the present time we must limit ourselves to probable suppositions, so much the more as it is impossible to credit information from Tokyo even concerning events which have taken place long ago, as it is less than probable that the Japanese would like to disclose to everybody their tactics and mode of fighting.

I repeat that it might be possible that the Japanese intended to overthrow General Linevich and advance further turning our two other armies. If this was, however, a demonstration, as supposed by some, it was such a powerful one that had it not met with such stubborn resistance from General Linevich's army, it

would have attained results which would have exceeded the problems of any demonstration, however large it might be. Such conclusion is brought about by the fact that on the left flank and in the center up to February 19th and 20th, the Japanese made stubborn attacks with large forces, while at that time their success was doubtful on the right flank; only after February 20th did their attacks on this point grow weaker—it was evident that they had transferred some of their forces against our right flank, thus giving General Linevich the possibility of taking the offensive himself. It is possible that the Japanese, seeing the impossibility of executing successfully the plan of operations drawn up by them east of Mukden, had shifted their decisive actions west of Mukden, seeing that our right flank was the weaker of the two.

Chapter X.

SHORT SYNOPSIS OF THE MUKDEN OPERATIONS.

Making a *résumé* of the course of events, we see that on February 11th the Japanese had concentrated all their efforts for the purpose of overthrowing the left flank of General Linevitch's army, making fierce attacks at the same time against his right flank, so as to make it impossible for him to reinforce his left flank. They attacked just as stubbornly our right flank, and sent out a detachment along the Liaokhe valley for the purpose of turning us from the west. All these operations were planned either for the purpose of impeding us from sending reinforcements to the left flank over which they might, had their operations at this point been successful, have marched on Fushun and further in a turning movement from the east, leaving a strong garrison at Fushun, or as a big demonstration on the left flank for the purpose of keeping us from sending reinforcements to the right flank. But the stubborn resistance of General Linevich's army and the great losses incurred by the Japanese (General Linevich's losses amounted to 21,000, while the Japanese, as the attacking party, lost probably near our fortifications at least 30,000 and maybe 40,000 men) altered here the correlation of forces, which was not in favor of the Japanese, and thus forced them to try to strike a blow in the west. On February 19th they began their energetic advance in that direction. Our passive actions on the 19th and 20th of February gave us the possibility of concentrating here quite considerable forces. Supposing the numerical correlation of the two armies to be expressed by the following figures—the Japanese 400,000 and ours 350,000, then on February 11th these forces were distributed as follows: The Japanese—the turning column, 50,000; the right flank,

120,000; the center, 70,000; the left flank, 120,000; the reserves, 40,000. Our troops—the right flank, 120,000; the left flank, 110,000; the center, 80,000; and the reserves, 40,000. On February 17th we had on the right flank 100,000, in the center 70,000, on the left flank 140,000, and in the reserves 40,000. Between the 20th and 23d of February our left flank was again weakened to 70,000, the center likewise, while the right flank had been reinforced. But at that time the Japanese had likewise concentrated here about 240,000, so that they had on their left flank and in their center about 120,000, and maybe still less. Thus on the western front the enemy had a numerical superiority over us. These figures, of course, are quite problematic, but their correlation is approximately correct.

On the 19th, 20th, 21st, and 22d of February the Japanese strained all efforts to throw backward the Third Army, occupying the left bank of the Khunkhe, and break through its lines in the rayon of Madiapoo-Youkhuntun, but all their attempts remained unsuccessful and they lost a great number of men. It is not an exaggerated statement that they lost about 20,000 men in those days. Seeing that their efforts did not succeed at that point, they advanced and strengthened their front north of Mukden, in the rayon of the Imperial Tombs. They met with some success here in the beginning (we had somewhat retreated), but the reinforcements received by us forced them to stop and to go back. Then they advanced still further for the purpose of turning us from the north. In order to strengthen our troops on the right bank of the Khunkhe, we had to shorten our line of front, for which purpose our troops, occupying the positions east of Sakhepoo and Sakhepoo-Madiapoo, were drawn in the night of February 23d to the positions along the right bank of the Khunkhe. The divisions of Artamonoff and Herschelmann were transferred north of the Imperial Tombs opposite Tsuertun, for the purpose of arresting at this point, under command of General Myloff, the advance of the Japanese towards the railway

line, as they had succeeded in approaching it to within a distance of from 3 to 4 *versts*.

A hurricane raged on February 24th. On that day our troops succeeded in somewhat throwing the Japanese from the railway line, opposite Tsuertun. But, taking advantage of the hurricane, which had raised whole clouds of dust, especially thick on the right bank of the Khunkhe on account of sandbanks consisting of the finest sand, and likewise of the fact that our troops did not occupy, as was proposed in the disposition, their positions, and that there was no proper maintenance of communications between the 3d and 4th Corps,* the Japanese broke through into our positions at Kiuzan. As this was done by small forces, it could always have been paralyzed and would not have been of any essential importance. At the same time the enemy, having been incapable of breaking through the lines near the Imperial Tombs and Tsuertun, sent out another column towards the north and occupied a village, situated on the same parallel as the Khushitay station, 10 *versts* west of this point—in other words, advanced more to the north than our troops in position near Tsuertun.

Thus, as in previous instances, we were forced to again extend our front, reduced the day before, to almost exactly the same dimensions. We were following the movements of the enemy all the time, subordinate to his actions, and never once did we take the initiative, never once did we try to execute some independent maneuver. Did Kuropatkin have sufficient forces to extend his front, and were the tired troops capable of executing rapidly and successfully such a maneuver? I believe that it would have been possible if we take into consideration that the losses of the Japanese were greatly superior to ours and that they were not less fatigued than we, also that for this operation there could have been taken part of the troops of the Third Army and some of

*There were only 10 battalions left in the 4th Corps, and they had to occupy a front almost 10 *versts* in extension.

General Linevich's army. It is evident that the Commander-in-chief did not share this view, as in the night of February 24th-25th he gave the order to retreat on Telin.

I cannot agree with the opinion of some persons, among others that of Colonel Ladygenski, correspondent of the *Novoe Vremia,* former correspondent of the *Russkoe Slovo,* that it would have been better to allow one's self to be surrounded than to retreat, for the surrounded army could have held out until reinforcements from Kharbin could have come to the rescue. I cannot agree with this opinion, because I did not think such prompt rescue possible. The Japanese might, by detaching, let us say, one division from their army, send it unimpeded towards Kharbin, and it would have destroyed on its way all our stores, our *etapes,* our railway, our bridges, and our establishments for the supply of water. Then our new army, which should have come to the rescue of the surrounded one, would have had to make a forced march from Kharbin to Mukden—a distance of 500 *versts*—without any supplies on the road it would follow. Therefore it would have been necessary to prepare and take along an enormous train for the necessary provisioning of the troops. It is evident that under such circumstances the rescuing army could not have reached its aim before some six weeks or two months. Of the provisions left in Mukden there would not have been sufficient for the supplying of the three armies for more than some ten or fifteen days, while there was a still smaller supply of ammunition. The Chinese population of Mukden, not over friendly towards us now, on account of the close proximity of the Japanese, would not have given us any of their own supplies, while requisition, when the Chinese hide carefully all they possess, more than once proved ineffective. Once the Commander-in-chief had recognized his incapability of extending his front in a northerly direction, where the Japanese had sent their troops, there remained nothing else for him to do but to retreat. How far he

was right in his belief is another question. However, I must remark that this retreat was effected far from the way in which it might have been executed. It seems to me that there was no general plan of retreat, and that everybody was left to his own devices.

Before coming to the analysis of the causes of our failures in general, and in particular of the operations near Mukden, I shall say a few words on the several institutions of our Army.

Chapter XI.

THE INTENDANCY.

Who knows not of the reproaches made in former wars to this institution? Who is ignorant of the rumors of and even trials for the abuses made by the employees of this department—abuses that grew into bywords? I too came to the theater of war greatly prejudiced against the Intendancy. When in the beginning I heard the actions of the Intendancy discussed under different colors from what my ears had been accustomed to, I never answered the speaker, but thought to myself, "In what connection does this worthy stand to this celebrated establishment?" But gradually, as I grew more acquainted wih the state of affairs, the local circumstances, and the conditions of war, my suspicious attitude towards the Intendancy disappeared slowly, and I began to have a better opinion of this department. It was gladsome to observe that, in this year of painful trials falling to the share of our country, the sentiment of citizenship had awakened in our hardened bureaucracy. The Intendancy question interested me not only as an observer, whose duty it is to place before the public the results of his observations, but also as a man who desired to convince himself that the general progress had also found its way into a midst which, so far, had been considered as hopeless. Thus, a stranger to everybody, I questioned the contractors, was an apparently accidental witness to deliveries, saw how the Army was provisioned and with what articles, how it was clothed and booted, and I must admit that I cannot make a single complaint against this institution. It is true that the Intendancy strove for cheapness, sometimes manifesting too much zeal in this direction to the greater injury of the service. Thus the Intendancy wanted to maintain the prices, at any cost, on some articles, as bread,

grain, hay, etc. The contractors did not wish to lower their prices; the Intendancy, in its turn, refused to buy at the prices demanded, and when, brought to the extremity, it consented, the prices rose and the contractors did not agree to sell for what they had first asked. Thus the products had to be bought at a higher price than could have been done earlier. This testifies to a lack of commercial aptitude among the Intendancy employees and to the preponderance of red tape over live work. The Chief Intendant, General Gruber, is the most honest man living. It will be impossible to find a man, even among his bitterest enemies, to accuse him of lack of integrity. He surrounded himself with young, prominent officers, mostly such as had graduated from the Intendancy Course of Instruction, likewise honest men and conscientious workers. I will not deny, of course, that there was no bad egg in this family and that not always did everything go smoothly in this institution. But it is gladsome to see that abuse is not the general rule of this establishment, as it had been heretofore, there being only a few sad exceptions, a fact that may occur anywhere, and especially in such an enormous undertaking as that of the Intendancy.

The Intendancy had no general deliverers—*i. e.*, the provisions were obtained on an economic plan, from first hands, straight from the producers or through secondary contractors. The principal contractor was the renowned collaborator of Skobeleff, Gromoff, but he operated here more out of love of war and patriotism than out of love of gain.

According to regulations concerning the administration of the armies and to the orders of the Commander-in-chief, the preparation of provisions and other supplies was made by each army separately, the Commander-in-chief giving only general indications. The special conditions of the country, the existence of only one line of communications (the East Siberian Railway) by which products could be brought, the limitation of the rayon in which the supplies could be obtained, on account of which,

there being three armies, their intendancies might compete with each other—all this forced to deviate from the established regulations and concentrate the preparation of products and various provisions in the hands of one person—namely, in the hands of the Chief Intendant, attached to the Commander-in-chief.

The character of the Commander-in-chief played likewise a *rôle* in the operations of the Intendancy.

The Chief Intendant placed before the Commander-in-chief for approval his plans for the smaller cost of supplies, the measures to be taken for the timely purchase of various provisions, and so forth.

For a *pood* of bean husks for the feeding of cattle was paid 1.20 roubles, while one *pood* of beans cost only 40 copecks. The discrepancy was evident: the remnants of the beans, after the oil had been extracted, cost more than the beans themselves. The exploitation was flagrant. The Chief Intendant proposed to have all the beans purchased and an oil-extracting plant established, so as to obtain the remnants at a very small cost in this manner. According to calculations, the price of the husks would be so much below that at which they were bought that it would have been of the greatest advantage to use them as fuel instead of wood, which was bought at from 60 to 100 roubles per cubic *sagen*. He likewise raised the question of cutting hay in the Mongol steppes and many other similar projects were placed by him before the Commander-in-chief. Commissions were instituted by the Commander-in-chief for the purpose of deliberating upon them, refusing to decide himself upon these questions. But who ignores what it means to place something in the hands of a commission? The activity of the latter even here on the theater of war was not distinguished by greater energy, and often when the commission had passed a resolution, the time for its execution had passed, never to return.

General Kuropatkin acted this way, evidently, out of precaution, desiring to avoid blame. But such caution is good in

time of peace and not in time of war, when every minute is precious, and the fear of blame is still more misplaced in such a period. The responsible position of the Commander-in-chief waives by itself all possibility of blame for economical measures. It is true that Government control was exercised over the Commander-in-chief. Thanks to the presence of this institution there existed the same red tape, the same routine which, even in time of peace, kill every live work. I might point out scores and hundred of cases where people were awaiting, in consequence of red tape, for weeks the money due them for materials delivered by them. This killed in the contractors all desire to have anything to do with the Government, and thus the Government had to pay on that account very large sums as compared to what it might have paid. Are these the results which the Government control desires to obtain?

There arises then the following anomaly: A man is entrusted with the entire wealth of the country, its honor and its future, while over a loss of 5 copecks control is instituted.

Chapter XII.

THE SANITARY SERVICE.

All the three armies are in excellent sanitary conditions. In the summer after the Liaoyang battle and especially in August, dysentery or the epidemic gastro-enteritis, as called by the physicians, and typhoid fever appeared in the Army, even in quite large proportions. But with the approach of winter the disease disappeared almost completely. In general, the percentage of men who fell ill on the theater of war was smaller than in time of peace. This is explained, on the one hand, by the dry climate of Manchuria, where the sun is shining brightly during the entire winter; and, on the other hand, by the excellent provisioning of the Army and the warm clothing distributed to the soldiers.

All the medico-sanitary establishments, as the military medical department, the institutions of the Red Cross, the *zemstvo* detachments, and detachments with other denominations, fulfill their duties most excellently during the time when there is no fighting. But this I cannot say about them at the time of battle. The military medical department is the one deserving of most blame, especially its administration. In Mukden, Telin, Kharbin, at every point there could be found a great number of physicians pining for want of work. They desired work, but it was impossible for them to get an appointment. There were, for example, such cases: The medical authorities sent a party of physicians from Kharbin to Mukden; the local medical authorities did not receive the surgeons and sent them back to Kharbin. And thus they traveled back and forth—they felt both offended and somewhat ashamed. But when large operations began, they were

hurriedly assigned to duty, perhaps at points where they would be of but little use or even quite superfluous; part of them was kept to be detailed to accompany sanitary trains. In the meanwhile hundreds of wounded were suffering, moaning, dying of loss of blood, awaiting their turn to have their wounds dressed; so some of them died before this turn came, and maybe, with timely aid, part of these might have been saved. I often had occasion to see at the dressing-stations a mass of wounded lying on the ground, an endless chain of them coming up, and still others brought, while there were only two surgeons and two to three hospital stewards to attend to the work under which they staggered. In addition to the dressing of the wounds, it is necessary to keep a list of the wounded who have been attended to. This work is done by the surgeon and the steward in turn. These surgeons and stewards are regimental ones, and the authorities never thought of sending to their assistance the physicians that were idling in the reserves. You see—the military medical department is a special establishment, almost a realm in itself. A well-applied first dressing of the wound is of great importance in the course of recovery. The dressing-stations are always within the sphere of fire, as modern guns and rifles have a very long range and the Japanese pay but slight attention to the Red Cross flags, often, it is true, entirely ignorant of their whereabouts. I stayed once two hours at the dressing-station, entering the names, family names, and other data concerning the wounded attended to, allowing during that time the medical *personnel* to take care of the wounded. Why should not each soldier have on him a ticket or card bearing all this information? then, instead of writing all this down and asking all these questions, the cards might be simply taken from them. The surgeons and stewards working at the dressing-stations are above all praise; our hospital stewards are excellent—the bandages made by them are simply artistic. The same may be said about those working at

the hospitals, where their labor is uninterrupted throughout day and night.

The establishments of the Red Cross are likewise impossible to be replaced. The flying detachments of the Red Cross are of great service in the first aid to the wounded. Other detachments are likewise of great assistance, but of all those I had the occasion to see, I must give preference to the Red Cross. The following strange fact must be noted with regard to the flying detachments—at the time of battles they are obliged to choose themselves their theater of activity, and they go where they believe they will be most needed. This comes from the utter impossibility for them to get indications from the military medical authorities as to where their presence would be most useful. This I explain by misplaced rivalry. What shall I say about the Sisters of Mercy? This question is a hard one to treat; I might be taken for a woman-hater, be accused of prejudice, should I speak unfavorably about them, while should I say nothing but good, I would fall short of the truth. It is true that a woman's hand has a soothing effect upon the shattered nerves of the wounded; that a woman is an excellent nurse, and that the wounded look trustfully upon the Sisters of Mercy, knowing of their sympathetic feeling towards them; that the good done by them is invaluable; that most of the Sisters are devoted heart and soul to their work. Much has been said and written about it and there is no need of adding or detracting anything. But there is another side to the question which not everyone will want to touch upon. The presence of women at advanced positions has negative sides. I will not treat this subject at length; I will say but one thing, and that is that the Sisters of Mercy ought to be kept exclusively at the sanitary medical institutions, established in the rear of the Army, and never at the front. I am convinced that as soon as these regulations would be in force, many of the Sisters would abandon their new-fangled fad and return to their former occupations in their native country, and the institution

of Sisters of Mercy would only gain and grow healthier through this circumstance. One of the Sisters, who remained at Mukden after this city's occupation by the Japanese, told that when she asked the Plenipotentiary of the Japanese Red Cross to give her the opportunity of making the acquaintance of the Japanese Sisters of Mercy, he answered her: "At the advanced posts we have no other women but prostitutes; our wives, our Sisters of Mercy are far at the rear, doing their work there."

In our Army it is just the reverse--the Sisters of Mercy are at the front and the prostitutes at the rear.

Talking about the *personnel* of the Red Cross that had remained at Mukden, I cannot help noting the following circumstance. There had stayed behind at Mukden some 500 of our wounded and about 400 Japanese. There were several scores of stewards, some 10 or 15 surgeons, and a still greater number of Sisters of Mercy left to take care of these 1,000 wounded, and with this *personnel* likewise remained Chief Plenipotentiary of the Red Cross Guchkoff and his assistant, Count Olsufyeff. I ask, Was it necessary that for these 500 wounded there should remain all this *personnel* with the Chief Plenipotentiary at its head? In addition to these we had over 60,000 wounded whom the Chief Plenipotentiary abandoned. I understand that should the medical *personnel* have declined to remain, Mr. Guchkoff's act would have been an example to the others (but at all events without keeping his assistant with him), would have a reason, but there were so many who desired to stay, that there was no need of the Chief Plenipotentiary's setting the example, and it was absolutely unnecessary for him to abandon an entire institution with several tens of thousands of wounded entrusted to his care.

There are among our Sisters of Mercy many such which are here dubbed "margarine Sisters." These are the wives of various members of the Army enrolling as Sisters of Mercy to be near their husbands. These Sister-wives, of no use whatever

in the work of aiding the wounded, have a nefarious influence on the Army. During lulls in the military operations the young officers pay court to the wives of their chiefs, the husbands grow jealous, the wives nervous, while the officers neglect their duty. During battle the wives are anxious about their husbands, the husbands about their wives, messengers are sent several times a day with notes as to health, and it is easily understood, that the service does not benefit from all this anxiety and uneasiness. In addition to this, the wives have to be taken care of, dwellings must be found for them, cars on the railway, when everybody is suffering from lack of accommodation. This is especially trying on account of the continuous movements of the Army. I know of cases when the railway *personnel* was placed in the following dilemma: either send several wives of superior officers or a certain number of wounded, and in two cases the preference was given to the wives. Remember the already mentioned consequences of the train having been sent to Telin 16 hours late. I am convinced that the presence of the wives of the chiefs at Port Arthur was not without its influence upon the premature surrender of this fortress.

It is necessary that the condition of leaving the theater of war be placed on the Sisters of Mercy having husbands in the ranks, and in general, the wives ought not to be allowed to join their husbands, even for a short period.

Before my departure from St. Petersburg, A. S. Souvorin asked me to investigate into the activity of Chief Plenipotentiary of the Red Cross Alexandrovski. Everybody was talking about him at that time, and his actions were mentioned in connection with the ceasing of gifts being sent to the Red Cross, which received such generous contributions in the beginning of the war. Unfortunately, at my arrival I did not find Mr. Alexandrovski on the spot, and could not discuss the matter with him. I always keep to the principle, *Audiatur et altera pars.* From the data which I succeeded in gathering concerning the

sanitary organizations and from their comparison to the expenditures made by the Red Cross at the seat of war during Mr. Alexandrovski's administration, I came to the conclusion that no special abuse was current in the Red Cross. It was even quite to the contrary; some expenditures of other sanitary organizations were greatly superior to similar ones made by the Red Cross. For example, the maintenance of the medical *personnel,* with the exception of the stewards, amounted to 1 rouble *per diem* per man, including the morning tea with bread and butter, a dinner of two or three courses, the evening tea, a supper of one course, and other supplementary expenditures; the maintenance of the stewards came to 50 copecks *per diem.* Taking into consideration the high price of the products existing at present in Manchuria, such expenditure is not excessive. The Red Cross bought horses at an average of 77 to 81 roubles, and mules at the rate of 106 roubles per head; the flying detachments purchased horses at an average of 81 to 93 roubles, while the military administration paid for them 100 roubles and more. One dressing cost the Red Cross about from 8 to 12 roubles, while it cost the military administration from 15 to 18 roubles. As far as I remember, Alexandrovski was blamed for not having presented his report in time—*i. e.,* he neglected the formal side of the business. But try to keep a systematic record with a limited *personnel* of clerks. Such a report would take, if conscientiously attended to, from ten to fifteen days of each month from the Plenipotentiary. What should he do? Keep up formalities or devote himself to live work? Here, at the seat of war, such reports would amount to nothing. Horses, products, all kinds of articles are bought from the Chinese. According to regulations, the report ought to be accompanied by documentary evidence—*i. e.,* in this case by the receipted bills of the Chinese. The model of such a receipted bill has even been elaborated. But what meaning would such bills convey to the Chinese? The con-

tents are absolutely incomprehensible to them, as they are printed in Russian. What could the persons verifying the bills make out of the hieroglyphics painted by the Chinese on these bills? In order to avoid bothering with each of the sellers separately a system was elaborated for use in Manchuria not only by the Red Cross, but by other institutions, to give several bills at once to be signed by the Chinese interpreters, in bulk, so to say, without its making any difference as to who made the hieroglyphics on the slips. If such a document was not attached to a report, dishonesty was flagrant; if it was, everything was right. What value could have a report accompanied by such documentary evidence? Would it not have been better should the superintendent simply enter the sum of the expenditure and the article for which it was expended? The essence of the matter would not be altered, but there would be much less work and the time spent upon the writing up of reports could be utilized for more important business. As to Mr. Alexandrovski's capacity as an administrator, I must say that he is an energetic man, knowing his work exceedingly well, and that his departure was greatly felt by the Red Cross in this direction. General Kuropatkin knew what he did when he invited him to take the place of Chief of the Health Service of the First Army. Alexandrovski managed the sanitary organization of the First Army during the battles of Mukden, and, thanks to his energy, all the wounded were evacuated; there remained not a wagon, not a cart behind. General Linevich asked him to return, acknowledging his useful activity.

It seems to me that on the theater of war it is not so much abuse that matters as certain party bickerings which screen truly useful work. If the cause of the decrease of contributions is looked for, it must be sought first of all in that same party spirit and in the fact that the sad occurrences in the Red Cross during time of peace keep the contributors from believing in the managers of the Red Cross.

The sanitary trains are very well organized and the *personnel* is excellent. They are of great assistance in the evacuation of the wounded. Their number is, however, insufficient, and during fights the wounded had to be mostly transported in freight-cars, which, on account of lack of space, were literally filled with them.

The Finnish two-wheel carts and the two-horse pack stretchers afford excellent means of transportation.

Chapter XIII.

THE RAILWAY AND THE EVACUATION OF MUKDEN.

The East Chinese Railway is of enormous importance in the present Russo-Japanese War. This line and, in general, the entire Siberian Railway present the only line of communication for more than half a million of troops, while one railway is necessary for each corps under normal conditions. The work of the Chinese Railway was increased by the circumstance that not only the troops and military stores arriving from Russia had to be carried, but also all kind of supplies, as fuel for the Army, timber and other *matériel,* bought and obtained on the spot. During battle the railway had to transport ammunition, evacuate the wounded, and almost daily carry troops. It is wonderful that it was able to solve this difficut problem with the means at its disposition, with the capacity of traffic for which it was prepared. The same may be said about the Siberian line.

When General Khorvat took upon himself the management of the Chinese Railway, its construction was far from being completed; according to the budget some 40,000,000 roubles were assigned for building expenditures. The traffic increased with every day, while the moneys for the bringing of the line to the requisite condition were not forthcoming (during the last months before the war the traffic returns reached very large figures, almost 2,000,000 roubles per month).

The war found the railway unprepared for the enormous amount of work in store for it at the beginning of the military operations. It was necessary to increase as rapidly as possible the number of sidings, enlarge the stations, install additional water-supply plants and many other apparatus. The work was energetically proceeded with, and, thanks to the unflagging

activity of General Khorvat, his assistant, Prince Khilkoff (the Chief of Repairs), and the entire railway *personnel,* this difficult task was completed in the course of a few months. In addition to all this, there was a lack of fuel for such an immense traffic. New coal-mine shafts had to be opened. There were excellent mines near the Yantay station, but after the battle of Liaoyang they remained in the hands of the Japanese. In addition to these, there was coal in the Fushun mines, worked by the Chinese for an immense period of time—these being, probably, the oldest mines in the world. But they were situated at a distance of 40 *versts* from the railway line, and it was, consequently, necessary to build a branch line to this point. No means were allotted for this purpose, and there was likewise no permit to build from the Chinese authorities. General Khorvat then constructed at his own risk and peril this branch which played a prominent *rôle* during our occupation of the Mukden rayon. Moreover, as the railway agents were acquainted with the local conditions, they were entrusted with various operations relating to the purchase of provisions, and they discharged this duty accurately and always in time. The employees, occupying formerly apartments of two, three, and more rooms, were, during the military operations, quartered with their families in one room, while the available buildings along the whole line were transformed into hospitals, lazarets, and other military establishments, a measure which rendered enormous service. Only by the energetic, unselfish work of all the employees of the railway, animated by the desire of giving all the assistance in their power to their native country, was it possible for this line to fulfill the difficult task which had fallen to its share. It is only by this self-sacrificing activity of the entire railway *personnel* that can be explained the scarcity of accidents in spite of such increased traffic. The same must be said about the activity of all the agents of the Siberian Railway.

All the works for the purpose of increasing the carrying

capacity and the exploitation of the railway were carried out under the simultaneous command of three chiefs: the Chief of the Railway Administration, attached to the Viceroy; the Chief of the Military Transportation of Troops, attached to the Commander-in-chief; and the Chief of the Rear. Each of these operated independently, gave out orders and regulations, made out dispositions, and the outcome of all this was a chaos which hindered the railway *personnel* from doing their work. This difficult state of affairs was not altered after the recall of the Viceroy from the theater of war; on the contrary, matters grew still worse after his departure. General Niedermüller, who was Chief of the Railway Administration, attached to the Viceroy, possessed great tact and could be argued with, while his successor lacked these qualities. What was the position of the Chief of the Line on whom rested the entire responsibility, having all these commanders above him, these managers carrying no responsibility whatever? His orders were countermanded often by word of mouth, the railway employees did not know whom they were to obey, whom they were subordinate to—and all this had a nefarious influence upon their work.

The principal thing is, that these indirect chiefs were often absolutely incompetent as far as railway matters were concerned. It is impossible to demand from them any knowledge as to railway business, for the capability of directing the traffic and managing the complicated railway work is acquired by long practice, by a detailed acquaintance with all the springs of this mechanism. Under such conditions, tact and caution must be the leading principles. Want of tact, arrogance, fault-finding, often met even in the orders and documents of these managers of the railway, brought the *personnel* to the point of wanting to give up everything and leaving. I happened to hear more than once how the railway employees said with sorrow that for all their pains, all their work, leaving them literally without sleep or rest, all they got was insults. I know somewhat General Khor-

vat. He is a man understanding his work thoroughly, remarkably tactful and ambitious. It was necessary to be deeply imbued with the consciousness of his responsibility, his duty towards his mother country, the obligation to fulfill his duty, no matter what the conditions might be, to work under the circumstances and within the atmosphere which surrounded him. The same may be said about the entire *personnel.*

They were absolutely martyrs, knowing no rest either by day or night. What immense work fell to their share during our retreats—and we did nothing but retreat! How much self-abnegation did not they display in their work! The telegraph operators were the last to leave the depots. When the Japanese reached one semaphore, they were at the next, carrying the telegraph apparatus on their shoulders. The telegraph line was being repaired under showers of bullets. Trains were started under rifle and artillery fire. And these were civilian employees, serving out of their own free will and under no obligation to risk thus their lives. All this arose from a sense of duty, from a desire to be of use to their country as far as it lay in their power. And for all this self-abnegation, for all this tremendous work, all they received was abuse—they heard not a word of gratitude or commendation from the higher commanders. Where is the man who did not abuse them? Even after the celebrated attack and battle on the Shakhe, the Commander-in-chief issued an order in which he thanked all the participators in the affair, but not a word was said about the railway employees. Only after the Minister of Finance, in whose jurisdiction belongs the East Chinese Railway, had asked by telegraph about the work of the railway *personnel,* did General Kuropatkin remember this branch and telegraph back that there could not be any two opinions about their highly useful and energetic activity. The Commander-in-chief might, under stress of his many obligations, forget his railway employees, but such forgetfulness is absolutely unpardonable in the Chief of Military Communications, as it may be explained by the desire

of lessening the usefulness of the railway *personnel* and thus increasing the importance of the managers of military communications. In General Khorvat's order to the railway employees after the Minister of Finance had communicated to him General Kuropatkin's answer, we read the following words in which a shade of bitterness may be noticed: "We do not work for praise, we work for the purpose of assisting the Tsar and our mother country in this year of trials." Such relations of the Chiefs of Military Communications towards the employees of the railway could hardly serve as incentives to greater energy, so indispensable in such difficult and trying times. If the railway *personnel* has successfully accomplished the problem placed before it, it was only thanks to their feeling of citizenship, the sentiment of their obligation to their country with which they were penetrated.

Happening to be often at the station, I could see how the *personnel* worked. I always found Messrs. Slavuta and Aghieff, chiefs of the sections of traffic, in the telegraph-room filled with tobacco smoke and vitiated air, sitting at their apparatus and sending out orders along the line. This was so both by day and by night. I absolutely could not understand when these men rested, ate, and slept. It seemed as if they never left their telegraph apparatus.

And these men for such work could not even hope to receive thanks in an order issued to the troops.

I shall not dispute the regulations, according to which the military authorities in time of war extend their jurisdiction over the railways existing in the rayon of the military operations. It seems to me that they must have a constant eye to the traffic and the railways themselves, and in the present war, not only on the line traversing the theater of war, but on the entire Siberian Railway, being the only line of communication and supplying artery of the Army. But this inspection must be organized in a practical way. It seemed to me that it would be better to place the entire Siberian and Chinese railways under the management

of one person, but with the condition that he should not meddle in the regulations issued for the immediate interior management of the line, as any foreign meddling would bring only confusion into the complicated work of railway administration. This person should limit himself to making certain demands from the railway *personnel* and seeing that these demands be accurately complied with. For this purpose he must be vested with great power. At present there are many chiefs: one on the Siberian Railway line, another in the rear of the Army at Kharbin, and a third with the advanced troops. We must add to this the meddling with the administration of movements of troops of the General Staff. Their activity is in no wise concentrated and their orders are often conflicting. What can be expected of such a condition of affairs?

I remember well the evening of February 24th, when orders were given to retreat. There remained many wounded at the Mukden station, also projectiles, the siege artillery, and many materials which it was absolutely necessary to take along. It was also necessary to take all the rolling stock. The director of the traffic, Mr. Slavuta, assembled all the engine-drivers. They arrived tired out, black from the dirt and dust that had gathered on them and which, probably, it would be impossible for them to wash off for several days. Mr. Slavuta told them of the impending hard work: "Gentlemen, orders have come to retreat. At the station there are many of our wounded brethren who shed their blood for our beloved country, many materials of all kinds, which we cannot leave behind. All this must be removed before morning, for to-morrow this station will be in the hands of the enemy. We will have to send out trains every two or three minutes. The way of the retreat is through the enemy's fire, which many of you have witnessed. This means that we will have to move in darkness. A difficult and responsible task is before you. Remember

that should a collision take place, our game would be lost. The traffic will be stopped, and then our wounded brothers and all the *matériel,* so indispensable to us, will fall into the hands of the enemy, the entire order of the retreat will be upset." And the engineers answered him, all as one man, that they understood fully the responsibility resting upon them and that they would do their utmost to avoid accidents.

The trains, filled with wounded, started one after the other, each consisting of from forty to fifty cars. The engineers were forced to strain their eyes unto pain, leaning with the entire body out of the caboose, to be able to distinguish something in the dark and to avoid collision with the train going in front of them. Towards morning everything was successfully hauled away. The last train left Mukden at 6 o'clock in the morning. It was necessary to leave at Mukden several hundreds of seriously wounded soldiers.

The sight presented by the evacuation of Mukden was awful. An immense conflagration—the Intendancy stores, the supplies of *ghiaolan,* wood, and timber were burning, and millions of sparks rose into the soft, mellow night, for not a breath of wind was stirring. The air was filled with burning atoms, which, illuminated by the fire, seemed an enormous swarm of moving insects. Flour-bags burst from the heat and columns of the finest dust rushed into the air like some extraordinary fireworks. The sight was imposing, unusually beautiful, but terror-inspiring. The platform of the station and all the surroundings were brightly illuminated. On the platform a string of stretchers with the wounded was continually passing by, some of these covered up with their heads in blankets from under which heart-rending means were heard, unconscious of what was going on around them, heedless of this fearful light or of the darkness of night, for to them everything was dark from unbearable pain. Among the stretchers men were hurrying to the depot, some carrying valises, some ordinary bundles; each and every one wanting to take along

as much of his property as was possible. But they were met with disappointment at the station, for they were lucky if they found room for themselves on the train. Further, near the store, where the presents sent to the men from Russia for the holidays were kept, soldiers were busy chosing various articles. Some of them took off their old felt boots to replace them by new ones, others changed their linen in the cold.

All this was lit up by a gigantic conflagration.

Further still a merchant, retreating with the troops, unable to take along all his goods, was distributing them among the soldiers in order that they should not fall into the hands of the enemy. A crowd of men surrounded his store. Upon receiving their presents, the recipients walked rapidly away, some carrying a bottle of brandy or of rum which the merchant had hoped to sell to the officers for a big price. Some of them opened the bottles on the way and drank as they walked.

The gigantic bonfire was illuminating the scene.

Great bustling reigned at the station. Everyone tried to get into the nearest train, fearing to be left behind. None thought any more of his belongings, being anxious only about himself. The platform was covered with various articles brought there to be sent away, but left on account of lack of room. Stretchers were coming up continually and were carefully transported into the cars. Somewhat aside a railway employee was standing in front of the house he had been occupying for years, where he had so lovingly made his home and with which he was loath to part.

One after the other the trains departed in long unbroken lines to the north.

The last train was ready to start. The medical *personnel* remaining at Mukden assembled for the purpose of seeing off the last defenders of the former Russian possession, which may the Lord allow us to have lost but temporarily. The train moved, the last good-byes of the travelers were heard, when a deafening report sounded—a salute to this last train. The ammunition-

chests had exploded. Other reports were heard in the distance, reports that were silent during the night, but with the morning began again their dire work. Two nations were destroying each other for the possession of these already ruined points. Which of them will be called to remove the traces of destruction and implant new civilization?

At the sound of the roar of artillery the last train, filled to bursting with wounded and unscathed soldiers, moved away from Mukden.

The railway employees sat close to each other on the roofs of the cars, being the last ones to leave Mukden, where they were the first pioneers of civilization. They were sorrowful, pained and ashamed to abandon and leave to other hands the work they had begun with so much love.

An immense torch was lighting their way of retreat. The pale tints of dawn were already struggling with the red glow of this torch that was consuming the millions painfully earned by the Russian people through the sweat of the brow.

Chapter XIV.

MILITARY CENSORSHIP.

The military censorship is concentrated in the Staff of the Commander-in-chief; there are censor sections in the separate armies, so that all the telegraphic information of the Russian and all the articles of the foreign correspondents, without any exception whatever, are authorized by the censor attached to the Commander-in-chief. Thus every telegraphic information sent from any of the telegraph stations at the advanced posts, before being forwarded to its destination, must go to the censor and then again back to the telegraph station to be forwarded to the addressee. Such procedure hampers and postpones the timely forwarding of correspondence. Only correspondence from Kharbin is authorized by the censorship established in the Staff of the Chief of the Rear. The censorship in the Staff of the Commander-in-chief is entrusted to Colonel E. F. Pestich, of the Genearl Staff. I can say nothing but what is commendable about this officer, possessing tact to the highest degree and imbued with the sentiment of his duty. Personally he considers the press from a much broader and more equitable point of view than his chiefs—the Staff of the Commander-in-chief with General Sakharoff at its head, a man looking upon the press as an inevitable evil, which has to be suffered in the Army only on account of the aberrate opinion as to the usefulness of the press having taken root so firmly. General Sakharoff thinks that the correspondents are present on the theater of military operations only for the purpose of spying and denouncing everything that takes place in the Army; for this reason, according to his opinion, the correspondents must be treater with the utmost severity, and Colonel Pestich, consequently, could not but submit to the views of his immediate chief and was

often placed in the most painful position. The opinion of the Commander-in-chief was opposed to that of his chief of Staff, but, being continually busy, he was rarely accessible to the censors, and thus the point of view of the chief of Staff predominated. General Sakharoff did not wish to understand that the public desired and had a right to be acquainted with the course of affairs going on at the theater of war, that it is interested in each movement, even the most insignificant one of our armies, and that it must know the positive as well as the negative sides of the organization of all the military establishments and all those belonging to them. There, far away from their native country, die thousands of men, not strangers; there flows the blood of that same Russian public, of its children, its brothers; on its means the very war is being waged—how should it not have the right to know what is happening to those that are near to it and how its means are being expended? The chief of Staff forgot that the Russian public could not, by his short and matter-of-fact informations, have the slightest idea of the course of the war and the condition of our Army, and that the press alone formed by its correspondents the only link between the public and all those that were engaged in the war. These correspondents alone informed the Russian people how bravely fought and died for the honor and glory of Russia their fathers, sons and brothers, under what conditions they lived and what they needed.

It is true that not all the correspondents were at the height of their calling with regard to unprejudiced representation of the events. Many had a strong tendency to show everything in a negative light, perhaps on account of the inclination, extant among the Russian intellectual class, to self-condemnation. I recall a conversation I had with one of the correspondents:

"Why," asked I, "don't you mention this fact?"

"You see, I belong to the liberal party, and this is why I can not mention this fact so as not to awaken an optimistic sentiment in the public; as to yourself, it is quite different; you can do it."

"I beg your pardon," I began with indignation; "do you mean to say that if I mention a positive fact, which will bring joy to the Russian people, whose relatives and loved ones are here shedding their blood, I testify to my being a retrograde? To tell the truth, is this to be a retrograde? I deem it my duty to mention side by side with the negative facts—the suppression of which, according to my opinion, is likewise a crime—the positive ones. By this I do not by any means narrow my views as a free thinker."

The position of a correspondent is not easy during war. The various institutions and persons take care of everybody, install everybody, but no one has thought of rendering the difficult task of the correspondents less heavy. Not mentioning the fact that the correspondent often does not know where to rest his head, as all available buildings are taken for military and other institutions; that he often does not know with what to appease his hunger—he never meets anyone aspiring to acquaint him with the true condition of affairs. What reproaches are heaped upon the correspondent for each inexact communication! But has anyone assisted him to verify the information received by him from without. I had recourse to the Commander-in-chief, asking him to establish a bureau where the correspondents could verify their informations. I was promised that such a bureau would be instituted, but there it ended. Not a few are the privations falling to the share of the correspondent during the pursuit of his vocation. I do not know why the public is under the impression that the correspondents are being courted. I will mention an incident which happened to me and which does not speak in favor of this belief. I came once to the staff of one of the armies (I shall not say which); it was night and the cold was 15 degrees below zero. As I naturally do not like higher chiefs, I laid before the chief of *etapes* my request for the assignment of some kind of shelter for the night, but he refused. I was obliged to have recourse to higher authorities. I found one general.

"Please, find me some place for the night; it is cold out doors, my horse is tired, and, as it is so late, I can hardly get to another place."

"I have no room for you; some three *versts* from here is a *fanza,* where, maybe, you might find shelter," answered the general.

"It will be difficult for me to find this *fanza* alone in the dark; moreover, the sentinels may take me for a spy," I tried as a last argument.

"Well, you may act as you please."

I accidentally met an officer of my acquaintance, who invited me to the dining-room to take tea. I rejoiced, and we had already begun drinking our tea, when my friend was suddenly called aside. He was reprimanded for his invitation, and I found myself again outdoors. That's what it means to be a war correspondent! Where was the vaunted Russian hospitality? At any rate, could these people be called Russians? I hasten to add that such cases are comparatively rare. I am sure that had the commander of the Army, whose Staff has received me with so much cordiality, heard of this incident, knowing him to be one of the most hospitable of men, he would surely not have praised his subordinates.

In addition to privations, the sojourn of a correspondent at the seat of war is subjected to many limitations. The permit to be present at the theater of war in general is given by the chief of Staff of the Commander-in-chief, in spite of which, whenever the correspondent desires to go to a certain army, he is obliged to get another permit for the sojourn in that particular army. Such a permit is likewise issued from the Staff of the Commander-in-chief. But, notwithstanding this, another permit has to be received from the Staff of the given army for the sojourn in one of its component parts (corps); in the Staff of that corps it is necessary to obtain a third permit to be able to be present in one of its smaller units, and so forth; one permit after another has to be issued indefinitely. How much time is spent uselessly to obtain

these permits! Each time the correspondent wishes to go to another army, he must go to the headquarters for a new permit. Would it not be simpler to give, instead of all these permits, one general permit to visit all the armies? and, should this be indispensable, the other permits might be issued, on the strength of the general one, for the sojourn in their component units.

Should one keep strictly to the rules and regulations issued for military censorship and the guidance of the war correspondents, it would be literally impossible to write about anything else but the weather, and this with caution, so that the enemy should not know if our soldiers suffer from the heat or the cold. There remains but one thing to be done—to repeat the telegrams sent by the Commander-in-chief to the Emperor or to the General Staff. These telegrams, since they are on the *tapis,* become known to the Army only through the telegrams of the St. Petersburg telegraph agencies. Let me ask, Why are war correspondents wanted on the theater of military operation under such conditions? It is understood that it is impossible to conform to all these regulations, and the censors must, *nolens volens,* deviate from them according to circumstances; but then, what sense is there in their issuing? Why should the censors be uselessly placed in an embarrassing position? The authorities issuing these regulations limit themselves, as they always do, to issuing them, while the execution rests entirely upon the subordinates, and if, should the necessity arise, these subordinates are forced to partly ignore them, all the responsibility rests on their shoulders: should any misunderstanding arise, they alone will answer.

In addition to censorship at the seat of war, there exists another—at St. Petersburg, in the General Staff—which, so to say, verifies the former and without this second censure no correspondence can be printed. It seems to me that, once the persons are on the spot where the events are taking place, they ought to know what may and what may not be allowed to appear in the organs of the press; it seems to me that one military censure is suffi-

cient; but no, it is being controlled and corrected by other persons, some 10,000 *versts* distant on the other side of the globe, little acquainted with the condition of affairs, ignorant of the positive as well as of the negative sides of the local military life. Is there any sense in such a control and is it not absolutely irrelevant?

Moreover, distrust seems to be one of the typical traits of our bureaucratic organization. Each of our institutions is subordinate to another controlling it. The public distrusts the bureaucracy, while the bureaucracy distrusts the public and itself. This distrust is the only reason for the lack of truly useful workers in the arena of social and political life. Distrust alone is answerable for the fact that we lack talented men of our own. Is it possible to admit that in a nation counting 150,000,000 men there should be no distinguished ones? They exist, but the general distrust hinders them from displaying their innate and acquired capabilities.

I often could not recognize my telegrams, and yet each word, each expression had been strictly weighed and discussed by the local censorship, and sometimes in serious conversation with the Commander-in-chief. At the head of the censorship is at present General Polivanoff, appointed as assistant to the chief of the General Staff, formerly the editor of the *Russki Invalid* and the *Voyenniy Sbornik*. During his editorship these organs became unrecognizable. It was interesting to read them, while formerly they served only to make known the orders and regulations of the military authorities. I believe that at present, when there is at the head of the censorship a man who, in addition to his other qualities necessary to a statesman, understands fully the importance of the printed word, and when the new Commander-in-chief has a high opinion of the importance of the press and his Staff concurs in this opinion—the censorship of military correspondence will be established on other, more rational principles.

Chapter XV.

THE REAR OF THE ARMY.

There were three rears on the theater of war before the evacuation of Mukden: the closest one at Mukden, a more distant one at Telin, and the farthest at Kharbin.

Mukden was the center of all the establishments of the active armies. The Intendancy, the Control, the Exchequer, the Bureau of Military Communications, the lazarets, and so forth. Mukden as a big Chinese city, supplied the troops with various provisions. The station of Mukden was the terminus and the principal station of the railway line. At that station were various stores of provisions, ammunition, and other articles. No women were allowed at Mukden except the Sisters of Mercy and the "margarine Sisters." A mass of various people had arrived here from abroad and from Russia as camp-followers: Caucasians, Greeks, Frenchmen, Italians from Chefoo and Shanghai, and many Chinese from the Chinese and Manchu provinces. It is more than probable that there were many spies among these so-called "jackals" of the Army.

Telin was, so to say, a large intermediary *etape*. Here were concentrated the bakeries, the stores of certain provisions and the hospitals. This was the final point in which the presence of woman was allowed, and for this reason there appeared here restaurants and other establishments, attracting young officers, who used to come here for "recreation" during their short leaves of absence. Drunken orgies and scandals even took place here. I must admit with regret that drunkenness was in general greatly developed among the officers; but cards, so prevalent in other wars, found no favor, and the officers sent most of their savings home.

The reports of the Chinese Bank and of the mail will be very interesting concerning this feature.

Kharbin is our principal nucleus on the Chinese Railway, running south to Port Arthur and east to Vladivostok. Here were concentrated the troops arriving from Russia, the marching commands of the rank and file, and the officers needed for the completing of the units. In general, this was the principal military *etape* for all the Manchurian armies. Here were established the hospitals and lazarets for the sick and wounded who could return comparatively soon to the active army. From this point were evacuated to Russia, after a certain period of time, the severely wounded ones and all those who needed a longer period for recovery. Here took place the preparation of provisions, and were likewise concentrated the principal reserve stores. At Kharbin was the seat of the administration of the entire East Chinese Railway, and here was a large branch of the Chinese Bank. In addition to the military, Kharbin counted 40,000 inhabitants. To this point had migrated people from all the localities of the world for the purpose of profiting in some way or other. Here were a large number of hotels, restaurants, and all kind of recreative establishments, and a numerous contingent of "singers." Here is the realm of drunken bouts, of orgies and all kinds of disorders which I have no desire to describe—in fact, would be ashamed to do so. Here is the kingdom of gossip and various rumors. What could not you hear at Kharbin? The military and the civilians were both possessed with the rage of telling news. A man newly arrived from Russia is simply terror-stricken by these tales. "O God, where are we going?" thinks he. But upon the arrival to the advanced posts these fears disappear, and there arises the doubt if all these tale-bearers have ever been at the seat of war, and if those terrible tales are not pure inventions? All gossip: some because they are drunk and some because they have nothing to do; others, again, for the pur-

pose of fishing in troubled waters, and there are many of such in Kharbin and in general in all Manchuria.

The corruption and cynicism reigning at Kharbin have no bounds. As an illustration of the cynicism and depravity, I will mention the following picture of Kharbin habits. I went once on foot with a colonel of the custom guards from the city to the station. In front of us there walked a well-dressed couple. They were followed by two officers, probably from the reserves, and words which no censure would ever pass, fell in showers to the address of the lady. The couple increased their gait, the officers did the same. At last the gentleman stopped and very correctly stated to the officers:

"Gentlemen, this is my wife and not a prostitute. I beg of you to deliver her from the necessity of listening to your improper speech."

To this one of the officers pronounced the following tirade:

"See here," and there followed an unprintable Russian word, "we have to shed our blood for you and we dare not touch your wives—"

Only the interference of the colonel put a stop to the aggressiveness of the officers, and maybe to something still more serious.

In the time of peace, when the officers' corps deems one of their members unworthy to wear the uniform, they ask him to leave the Army, and he generally goes to the reserve. When the country is in need of its best officers to lead the military operations, these officers, found unworthy during peace-time, again get into the Army. Men considered as a harmful element in time of peace again become the leaders of soldiers in time of war, when the strict observance of discipline and a good example are of the greatest importance. What may be expected of such leadership? Of course, there are exceptions, and we meet men who had succeeded in reforming. I heard the following case from the lips of a person occupying a prominent post in the Army:

"One day," said that person, "there came to me an officer

at Mukden. He greets me and promises to come again. Of course, we are glad to see anyone here, but I could not recall where I had seen him and how I had made his acquaintance. At last I remembered.

"I was told once," continued the narrator, "that a gentleman wanted to see me. I received him and it came out that he was a retired officer 'without means,' and so forth. I gave him a certain sum. A few minutes later some errand brought me to my wife (I have two entrances on the same stair-landing). What was my surprise when I saw in her apartment the same man with the same request for assistance. It was evident that begging had become his profession."

It is not difficult to see how much the Army would gain in time of war if it were rid forever of this element, undesirable even in time of peace.

The rear in general is one of the plagues of the Army. I am not a cruel man by nature, but here I deem the most draconic measures necessary. The Chief of the Rear must be a man well known for his strictness, vested with immense power, including the right of condemning culprits to be shot without previous judgment.

Chapter XVI.

CAUSE OF OUR FAILURE.

Now, after all the above mentioned, I will endeavor, without entering into details, to explain the causes of our failure in general and of the Mukden operations in particular.

The principal cause of all our failures in the present war lies, according to my opinion, in the fact that we have but one line of communication on the theater of war—one pair of rails of the East Chinese Railway and a similar one pair of rails of the Siberian one, over which both the troops and the war *matériel* has to be carried. But though we were unable to increase to the necessary dimensions the carrying capacity of the Siberian Railway, we had the possibility of building at the very seat of military operations two lines of communication for a more successful conduct of the operations, the movement of troops, the transportation of military supplies and provisions. We had all the necessary means at hand, and only the lack of consciousness of the necessity of these two lines hindered us from taking advantage of them. We could have easily built these two railway lines, one from Gundjulin, or, still better, from Kharbin, in the direction of Sinmintin along the valley of the Liaokhe River, the other from that same Gundjulin to Fushun, and further over a broken *terrain,* choosing the best system, at a distance of 25 to 35 *versts* from the existing railway line. The construction of these branches could have been executed in a short time, as there could be found on the spot a *cadre* of skillful technical engineers and the working force in the local Chinese population. Some difficulties might have arisen as to the railway *matériel* and the transportation of the materials would have had to take place with

that of the troops in turn. But if we take into consideration the fact that there were at times two weeks and more when neither troops nor supplies were carried, on account of their not being sent by the military authorities, we might, by taking advantage of this time, have brought to the spot all the *matériel* necessary for the construction. (For the two lines some 150 to 170 trains would have been necessary—*i. e.*, some twenty days of transportation.) Lastly, should it have been impossible to bring the whole *matériel* from Russia, the rails from the road to Khabarovsk might have been temporarily taken up and a mail-coach road established to that city. Khabarovsk would have suffered, but how much would not the military operations have gained.

Having two lines of communication, joined by rail with each other, and with the Chinese Railway, two branches having been constructed—one, for example, on the parallel of Telin and the other on the parallel of Mukden—our Army could have easily proceeded with all its operations. The transportation of troops and of military supplies would have been rendered easier, and, what is still more important, we could have sent to the points where the necessity should arise large bodies of troops without fatiguing the soldiers. We would not have needed to be in fear of the turning movements of the enemy; on the contrary, we could have made such turning movements ourselves without risking being cut off, for then we would have had a railway line in our rear carrying provisions and ammunition to our lines.

Our troops always repulsed the open attacks of the enemy and the Japanese did not have great success with them; but against the turning movements, especially those outside the limits of the Chinese Railway, we were absolutely defenseless, and they resulted always in our troops retreating. In general, we were little capable of maneuvering without the limits of our line of communication; it looked as if we had been glued to the East Chinese Railway and did not even try to leave its region.

Our too bulky and unwieldy train was a great impediment

to our facility of movement. I saw the retreat of the train to Telin, and therefore had the opportunity of observing all its dimensions, for when it was distributed among its units, it did not catch the eye so much. Drawn out into one line, this row of vehicles with various military possessions, with stools, tables, barrels (I asked, "Why do you carry these barrels along?" and was answered, "Just so, we might need them, perhaps"), and other household articles, demanding large means of transportation, made such an impression that one doubted if it could ever get away and that one thought that should part of it fall into the hands of the enemy, we would not lose much by it. The Japanese, not desiring to abandon their booty, would carry it along with them, and then, perhaps it would be we, and not they, who would press upon the other—*i. e.*, our *rôles* might have been inverted.

Where did all these household articles come from? War is not a picinic, not a *partie de plaisir*. In time of war who can think of comfort? and it is impossible to fight without privations, and even very great ones. Whence comes this aspiration for a comfortable life on the positions? The Russian troops did not distinguish themselves by such aspirations in former wars. Maybe it is the result of the general progress in civilization? I believe that this is not the case. The example given by the higher authorities had much to do with it. To give a better idea of the luxury in which these higher authorities lived, I shall have, in spite of my desire to the contrary, to touch upon the life of the late Commander-in-chief and Viceroy in the Far East, Admiral Alexieff.

Admiral Alexieff, in addition to the luxurious apartments of his house at Port Arthur, at Dalny, and, during the latter months, at Mukden, had a magnificent train consisting of Pullman cars with immense parlors, and dining-rooms for himself and for his entire Staff. He traveled like a Czar. Before the starting of his train another was sent out for the purpose of

ascertaining the safety and good condition of the road. Admiral Alexieff did not like to travel by night and stopped at the stations; but he could not endure the whistles of the locomotives and the movement of the trains by night was disagreeable to him. And, so as not to trouble the rest of his Excellency, not a train was allowed to come nearer to the station than the samaphores, and all movement was interrupted over the rails lying close to the stations. The trains with troops and war *matériel* were waiting, however necessary they might be, no matter how feverishly they were expected on the field of battle.

Following the example of Admiral Alexieff, General Kuropatkin likewise asked for such a train, his chief of Staff did not wish to fare worse, and in the end separate trains with Pullman cars became the ownership of all the commanders of the armies and even of the chiefs of some establishments. It came about that thus all the passenger cars on the Chinese Railway were taken for the chiefs, while the greater part of the officers and passengers had to be transported in freight cars. Thus, while some of the officers traveled in freight cars, or the so-called "cattle cars," their comrades of the Staffs lived and traveled in parlor cars. Such difference could not have a favorable influence upon their relations, and the ancient enmity against the Staff officers, existing in time of peace, grew still more bitter here, at the seat of war, where it ought not to exist at all, where friendly joint work was necessary for success. But, in addition to enmity, such luxury awakened in the others likewise the desire to live comfortably. This was the cause of the agglomeration of such a mass of various articles, necessitating enormous means of transportation. It was likewise brought about by long halts on one spot.

In addition to this, these dwelling-trains had another bad influence; they kept our Staffs chained to the railway, and, maybe on account of this, the operations were planned so as not to leave the railway—*i. e.*, their luxurious dwellings. General Linevich was the only one to abandon his train and live in *fanzas*. Gen-

eral Grippenberg was very much displeased that his train had no electric lights, as did the others, and had no peace until he had them put in.

The frequent movements of these trains often impeded traffic at the stations on account of necessary maneuvers. Moreover, the necessity of maneuvers depended solely upon the phantasy of the chiefs at times.

For example, one of the generals had a milch-cow sent him from Russia. An officer, a General Staff officer, if you please, gave orders that the car with the cow should be placed at a certain point in the train, and for this purpose complicated maneuvers were needed. The cow was at last brought to the place designated, but it was found inconvenient by the general's valet, and again maneuvers were necessary for the purpose of changing the location of the car, and this, I believe, was done three times. The trains arrested near the semaphores could not reach the station on this account for a whole half-day.

General Grippenberg occupied one branch with his train, while the Commander-in-chief was on the other. The distance between the two was only a few *versts*, which could have been made without any difficulty whatever in a carriage by a good mud road. But General Grippenberg desired to travel in his train, and no assurances of the railway authorities, stating that the movements of his train, first to the main road and then again to the branch, took a great deal of time and hindered traffic, availed anything.

It is well to mention here an incident which took place during the Franco-Prussian War. The royal train arrived at one of the stations. The chief of the station stated that if this train should be immediately allowed to proceed, this would interfere with the movement of the military trains and several days would be necessary to restore the order, but that should His Majesty remain one day at this station, no hampering of the movement of trains would ensue. And the King remained at the station. I

am sure that, should a case like this take place with our Ruler, he would have acted like the King; but the question is, Would anyone have dared to state the matter to him? Should a case like this be placed before any of our generals, the chief of the station would have received no end of abuse and heard the well-known "I will place you under arrest." The movements of the trains would, of course, have been stopped. And such cases took place more than once.

The cleaning of refuse from such trains cost about 50,000 roubles a month to the administration of the rilway.

During the present war the entire camp service is discharged by soldiers: that of the Japanese, by coolies. I think that we too might have hired help for this purpose. This would cost a little more, but we would have many more bayonets. The non-combatant contingent of our armies, in general, is very large, about 30 per cent, and no selection is made, so that often a young, magnificent soldier becomes a non-combatant, while a grizzly bearded reservist goes to the ranks. There are in our Army, as I was told, some 40,000 officers' servants for some 11,000 or 12,000 officers—*i. e.*, more than 3 men per officer on an average. In most cases these are the best soldiers, because the officers choose the most intelligent and skillful among them as strikers. Of course, the officers *cannot* be left without servants, but their number might be limited to, let us say, 2 per officer on an average. This would give some 15,000 more bayonets to the ranks. During lulls the officer might take as many men as he wants, out of his company; but during battle, when strikers are least necessary to the officers, when the duty of these men is limited to the care of the officers' property and, in case of movements, to seeing that it is taken along, one striker might do for two officers, the others going back to the colors. This would have added several more thousands of fighting units, and (who knows?) the results might have been different at Liaoyang and Mukden if we had had these surplus bayonets.

Little attention is paid in our Army, in general, to employing hired help for various non-military purposes. For example, the engineers of the Chinese Railway proposed to take upon themselves the construction of various works to be made by local workmen; such as roads, bridges, redoubts, and so forth, which are now being built by sapper battalions and other troops. The number of soldiers freed would have increased the contingent of combatants. This proposal, for some reason or other, was not accepted.

The cavalry contingent on the theater of war is comparatively large, but in reality it is not sufficient even for reconnaissances; this is because cavalry is mostly requisitioned for convoys. Convoys and orderlies are necessary, but the number in our Army is far above the required normal contingent. Who has not a convoy and orderlies from among the cavalry?

The Staffs of the Commander-in-chief and of the commanders of armies knew little about the strength, movements, and intentions of the enemy, while the Japanese knew literally everything concerning us. They received information concerning our dispositions even before these were made known to the commanders of separate units. Our spy service, though considerable sums are expended upon it, is below all criticism. Not one important information did we receive through our spies. Here, likewise, large sums were expended absolutely unnecessarily, while in some cases, where they ought to have been paid, cents were grudged (the action of Oukhach-Oronovich in regard to the Chinaman who brought news as to the turning movement of the Japanese along the Liaokhe). In general, however well our spy service is organized at home, where we dispose of an entire army of spies, so badly did we manage it here, where it was necessary to gain victory over the enemy. Not a few of our spies were in Japanese service and reported to us with the knowledge of their employers, and we believed such information.

It has been said that our cavalry reconnoitered badly. It

might be so, but here too the system of distrust, reigning everywhere among us, brought a great deal of harm. The distrust with which the information secured by the reconnoiterers was received could have killed all desire for conscientious reconnaissance. The principal thing was that no one endeavored to verify the ground of such distrust, and nothing has such a baleful influence upon the work of subordinates as the unfounded distrust of their chiefs towards them. It is true that often the reports of the reconnoitering parties, especially concerning the numbers of the enemy, were wrong. But this could not always be ascribed to the lack of conscientiousness of the reconnoitering squads. It was difficult to obtain accurate information under the conditions in which they had to work. The rayon of military operations was thickly inhabited by Chinese; in almost each square *verst* could be found a Chinese village surrounded by clay walls. It is not easy to find out how large is the numerical force of the enemy, taking into consideration that the natives, out of fear of the Japanese, always said what they were ordered.

I was often a witness as to the way the chiefs received requests for reinforcements on account of the great losses suffered. In the greater part of cases such requests were refused, the refusal being explained by the statement that the commanders often exaggerated the importance of their losses. It is true that some generals were ready to ask for reinforcements even before the fight had begun; but many asked for them only in case of actual need. Rarely did anyone ascertain if support was indeed necessary—it was simply denied. There were many cases in which, on account of reinforcements not being sent, the affair took an undesirable aspect, as, for example, the already described affair of the 1st Siberian Regiment at Tashichao (battle of Mukden).

The system of distrust reigned, in general, in the entire Army. The Commander-in-chief distrusted the commanders of the armies, as otherwise it would be impossible to explain why he gave instructions in regard to the most insignificant move-

ments. The commanders of the armies had no right to move a single battalion without his knowledge. The dispositions were worked out up to the most minute details in the Staff of the Commander-in-chief; this is why no one—I do not speak about the chiefs of small units—not even corps commanders, could develop any initiative. The microbe of distrust had contaminated the entire Army—the chiefs distrusted their subordinates, the subordinates distrusted their chiefs. All executed the orders only in a mechanical way, often not knowing anything as to cause and purport; each and every one aspired only to having a document—an order—to exonerate himself in case of an unsuccessful ending of his operations. The narrow limits of the order allowed no one to consider the good or evil arising from its execution. General Myloff was reprimanded for having decided to attack the enemy before the arrival of the Commander-in-chief, as had been ordered the evening before. Later on the attack was admitted as having been made at the opportune moment, and should the general have acted against his conviction, the result might have been different.

Distrust came to the theater of war from Russia. Everybody came to the active army with all the gossip, the intrigues and the personal feelings of peace-time. But this baggage of contaminated and corrupt contents could not have fallen on rich soil, if the higher authorities had shown in their relations to their subordinates the example of sincerity and trust.

"All say that we have no generals."

"Where do you take this from?" I asked.

"Well, has any of our generals shown any capacity?" is the ordinary answer.

"But, please, when and where had they the possibility of showing their capacity?"

"What is it you are saying? We are fighting one year and a half."

"All this looks so to you, because you are here; but go to

the front and you will see that our generals so far—I do not mention the chiefs of small units—even the corps commanders, had not until now the possibility of displaying any independence, taking any initiative. I say 'so far,' because I think that with the new commander matters will be different."

The system of General Kuropatkin—that of deciding upon everything himself, did not give his subordinate generals any possibility to act independently and according to their own initiative. The generals Tserpitski, Myloff, Zarubayeff, Mischenko, Rennenkampf, Ivanoff, Daniloff, Kondratovich, Martynoff, and many others are all men possessing talent, energy, and initiative. Let us take General Mischenko as an example. Was it his place to be the chief of a cavalry detachment? He is an artilleryman and would have made an excellent corps commander, even an army commander, to whom important independent operations might have been entrusted, all initiative being left to him. Yes, we have men and many of them, but our system does not allow them to put out their heads further than what is permitted according to formality. Have we few talented colonels in the Staffs and with the colors? I can name some ten of the most capable who might have commanded brigades and divisions. But they are young, we are told, and have not the requisite grade. Therein lies the whole thing; we keep to the form, without paying any attention to the value. According to my opinion, if a colonel is capable of commanding a corps, give him that corps; if a talented captain may be a regimental commander, give him that regiment.

It will be said to me:

"What are their seniors to do?"

"If those seniors are incapable, untalented, let them go and rest. Military service is not a charitable institution; armies are necessary for battles, and not for parades.

Those who dub the officers of the General Staff as "do-littles" are wrong; they are wrong because not a few of them take part in actual fights, command separate units, and many of them have been

wounded and killed in the field. It is true that the General Staff has occupied all the posts, even such where the special knowledge acquired at the Academy of the General Staff is not necessary: the evacuation of the wounded, the management of the trains, the loading of the projectiles, the entraining of the troops, the administrative posts of the commissaries, all positions which could be occupied, with better success perhaps, by people without any military training. Even the chief of train of the Commander-in-chief, a post which might have been given to a lieutenant of the reserve, was occupied by a lieutenant-colonel of the General Staff. This took place when there was a lack of officers of the General Staff for purely military purposes, as, for example, the officers of the General Staff would have been far more useful and in their place in reconnoitering service. In general, in the present war the entire management of all branches of the service was in the hands of officers of the General Staff, and for this reason they are responsible for all the results.

The character of the Commander-in-chief was clearly shown in all his actions. His irresolution, going hand in hand with absolutism and the distaste of listening to good advice, accommodated itself to the system adopted by him, that of passive resistance and the weakening of the enemy during the retreat. But this system was not approved of either by Russia or by the Army, and with each new retreat discontent grew, this discontent forcing Kuropatkin to desist from the plan adopted by him and corresponding best to his character—and he suffered a *fiasco*. When the Army was entrusted to a man, it was wrong to ignore his character, which could not be altered according to desire. For this reason he ought not to have been interfered with. If later on it was admitted that his system could not bring about the desired results, it would have been necessary to replace him by some other man. But, leaving him at his post, it was wrong to make him deviate from the plan he had elaborated beforehand.

General Kuropatkin is not an old man, is very hardwork-

ing, and distinguishes himself by great activity, while in reality the scope of the Commander-in-chief is rather limited, as it consists, mainly, in general management, in direction without any active part in the real command of the troops. Such activity did not satisfy the lively nature of General Kuropatkin and he went beyond these limits, sometimes leading independent operations in person. Such meddling, if the word may be used, in the affairs entering into the exclusive competency of the Army commanders, had its very negative sides; moreover, it deflected the attention of the Commander-in-chief from giving instructions as to the general command.

The command of an independent army, consisting in the direct management of the troops, is better suited to the character of the former Commander-in-chief.

As soon as there arose indications as to the concentration of large hostile forces, accompanied by little information, the sensitive Commander-in-chief became nervous and shifted his troops without any real necessity. I have already observed how much harm arose from such mixing up, the frequent occurrence of which only increased the evil and often influenced unfavorably the course of the battles.

The chiefs, in such cases, commanded troops which they did not know—the peculiar capacities, the endurance, the character of these strange units were unknown to them. This undermined the compactness, the integrity, the wholeness of the Army, which in all armies is obtained with so much difficulty.

Grippenberg's departure and rumors as to his return were explained by distrust felt in St. Petersburg towards General Kuropatkin and to the system of constant retreat adopted by him. This undermined greatly the prestige of the Commander-in-chief at the time when on the theater of war arose the most critical, most serious moments, in which the faith in the higher commander ought to be strongest. It seems to me that the enemy could not have chosen a better time to give us a decisive blow. The Japan-

ese are excellent psychologists; they understood well the feeling of our Army, its distrust of the Commander-in-chief, and, as it may be seen, weighed all this before deciding upon their risky operations near Mukden.

Technique, so far as application of various technical means is concerned, stands lower in our Army than in the Japanese. They make use of all the modern improvements for the organization of the defense as well as of the attack. The principal thing is their having a great number of machine guns. They had appreciated already before the war the value of this dreadful weapon. There is no doubt that machine guns play an important *rôle*, especially in the defense—one machine gun being equal to a company of soldiers. We did not give due attention to this deadly arm in the beginning of the war. Even later on, after having experienced on ourselves all its importance, we did not introduce it energetically enough into our Army; up to this time the number of machine guns is much smaller in our Army than in that of the enemy.

I have already described in the beginning how our troops were brought from Russia to the theater of war, and how, on the road, on account of the imperfect organization of the transportation of troops, the discipline of the men was not at the necessary height. Why should not these troops have been formed, while still in Russia, before their sending off, into temporary units (companies, for example), with non-commissioned officers and officers in active service, though these might be in numbers below the normal status (they might return after having taken the men to their respective detachments). Before their sending off to the seat of war these temporary units might undergo military training for a week or two, go over the military regulations and get acquainted with the new arms (there were such who, immediately upon their arrival, went into battle without having learnt how to handle our new rapid-fire rifle), restore their already forgotten military spirit, remind them of their soldiers' profession

and of the difficult task lying before them upon their reaching their destination. On the road military drill could likewise take place during the halts, a thing which would greatly benefit the men passing long hours without moving in the close atmosphere of the cars. Under such conditions no disorders would arise, no slackening of discipline, the troops would reach their destination fully prepared for their difficult duties, and, what is most important, the contaminating microbe of insubordination and violation of discipline would not have penetrated to the seat of war.

The older the soldier, the more disaccustomed has he grown to military work, the less he is acquainted with the new regulations and the new arms, and, what is the most important, the less mobile he is. In wars like the present, waged far from the mother country, the sending of older reserve soldiers ought to be avoided, as long, of course, as there is no actual need to do so; it must be limited to the younger men. It seems to me that in the actual war Russia was not forced to mobilize her entire reserve, and it would have been more to the point to mobilize all the districts instead of only certain ones, and to call to the colors only the youngest reservists. In that way, not only would the troops have been formed of the best material, but justice would have been maintained with regard to the population, for under those conditions all Russia would have paid her tribute to the war, as far as the taking part of her population is concerned, while under the system adopted some districts gave their entire forces and others gave almost nothing at all.

There is one more cause of enmity between the officers of the Staff and those serving with the colors. The Staff officers easily obtain all kinds of decorations, while those serving in the line are rewarded for actual bravery with great difficulty. The Staff officers all have decorations, while among the officers of the line there are not a few wounded ones who have returned to their regiments even without the so-called "cranberry" (Anna decoration

of the fourth class). I remember how, before the departure of General Kuroptakin, all the officers of the Staff rushed to get decorations. Several hundreds were distributed. It was disagreeable to listen to their disputes as to who was entitled to which particular decoration. All, even those who, as we say, "hadn't smelt powder," wanted orders with the swords for bravery. It is very peculiar that not one of these intrepid Staff officers had been wounded throughout the entire campaign.

I am again referring to the Mukden operations. According to my opinion, as I have already stated, our failure at Mukden must be attributed, principally, to the circumstance that the Second Army passed two days in inactivity, giving the Japanese the opportunity to concentrate their forces. It is very probable that thanks to this circumstance the enemy decided to transfer his principal operations and strike a decisive blow against our right flank, ignoring our remaining positions. As far as I know, this delay in the operations can not be laid at the door of the Commander-in-chief, for in the beginning of the Mukden affair, remembering the still fresh incident with General Grippenberg, he limited himself to giving general directions. Later on, seeing our failure, he again took the active direction into his hands. Here again we recognize General Kuropatkin's character. If he considered his system as the best adapted to the existing circumstances, he ought not to have been confused by any reception given in St. Petersburg to any general, be he friend or foe, and so much the more at such a critical moment, when the change of a system which had reigned throughout the entire campaign, could evolve only negative results.

The final success of the Japanese at Mukden was not due to the fighting or numerical superiority of their army, or their skillful plan of operations, but to their knowledge of our Commander-in-chief's psychology. They had studied carefully his plan of campaign, the character of his operations, his mode of fighting and made allowances for his state of mind at the time

being. If we carefully consider the Japanese operations at Mukden, we can not find a single factor of a signal victory gained by fighting. In reality they could not, in spite of their technical and numerical superiority, take a single one of our more important positions near Mukden. Not a single remarkable movement can likewise be designated. They had but one important advantage on their side—ease of movement. Thus their understanding of the Commander-in-chief's psychology was the principal cause of their success. It allowed them to strike a decisive blow, sure of its success, in spite of the risky maneuvers and operations. It was they who led us, who forced us to do what they wanted. We obeyed their initiative as if hypnotized. Follow closely the Mukden fights. The Japanese concentrated their forces at a certain point, or made believe that they concentrated them. Instead of endeavoring to make a counter-maneuver, we rushed towards them and shifted our troops from one front to the other. The Japanese changed the direction of their movements—we followed them. All their efforts under Mukden to win by desperate attacks broke against our stubborn opposition. Meeting with failure in affairs where skill does not play a prominent *rôle,* where true courage and steadfastness are the winning elements, the Japanese moved on towards the north and dragged us along after them. If we had attacked his positions at the time when the enemy was extending his front, seemingly endeavoring to turn us, but in reality enticing us after him, it is possible that we might have succeeded in breaking through his lines and frustrating all his plans by a skillful maneuver, forcing him to take up another position than the one that was advantageous to him. When we had extended our front to such a degree that we could no more follow the enemy's movements, the Commander-in-chief decided to retreat—*i. e.,* to escape from under the influence of the enemy at the time when the success of the Japanese was coming to an end. I derive it from the fact that during the retreat our position near Mukden was dangerous. A narrow passageway was

formed, fired at by the enemy from east and west. Our troops retreated by this passage, with the exception of General Linevich's army, which was retreating independently of the other troops. Both flanks of the enemy advanced some 10 *versts* more to the north than our rear guard. This rear guard, under command of General Myloff, was very insignificant, consisting in all of some 25 battalions with limited contingents, each numbering not over 500 men. The Japanese could easily have achieved a junction at any point, and thus cut off our way of retreat, destroying our rear guard. How did it result? This handful of intrepid men, as compared to the forces of the enemy, skillfully commanded, surrounded in reality, keeps off the entire Japanese Army, and we succeed in calmly marching off with our troops, our train, and our artillery. Some 35 to 40 guns, and part of the train, which fell into the hands of the enemy, were abandoned by us through carelessness and negligence. Here, again, the Japanese did not take advantage of their victory to rout us entirely and place us in the necessity to end the war on conditions dictated by them. This time, again, they allowed our Army to escape, giving it the opportunity to grow strong anew and become, as heretofore, capable of fighting, their losses being not less than ours, while the disorganization and fatigue of their troops were so great that they had become incapable of pursuing further their victorious advance. Where do you see, let me ask, the skill and remarkable tactics of the Japanese military commanders? I am confident that had we been in the place of the Japanese—*i. e.*, were our *rôles* inverted in the Mukden affair, nothing would have remained from the Japanese Army, in spite of all our shortcomings.

Generally speaking, I failed to notice these marvels, these wonderful qualities of the Japanese, about which such legendary tales were being spread. They are fables, disseminated by those to whom they were needed, while we took them up blindly and repeated them like parrots. We were told of the astounding bravery of the Japanese; that neither their officers nor their sol-

diers knew what retreat was; that they shot themselves or performed the *harakiri* rather than to allow themselves to be taken prisoners, and when captured they smashed their heads against the walls. I have seen nothing of the kind. It may be that some intellectually abnormal or over-enthusiastic officer has taken his life, but this is an exceptional fact, which was likewise observed in our Army. There were likewise some among us who sent bullets through their brains when left wounded on the field of battle, not desiring to fall into the hands of the enemy. But I myself was a witness how Japanese officers, I do not mention the soldiers, fell on their knees and raised their hands, begging for mercy. I saw their flights, saw how their troops met the fleeing with fire so as to keep them from retreating, and how, in spite of this, they were unable to arrest their flight. We were also told that the Japanese had excellent topographical maps, far superior to ours. This was not so. They had got possession of our maps, made Japanese inscriptions above the Russian ones, and photographed them. These were the maps they used. I do not wish to diminish their good qualities. The Japanese Army presents a compact, united whole, animated by a common spirit; the Japanese are stubborn and intrepid fighters, but they are men like others. There is nothing superhuman in them, nothing of what has been sung in their praise. As I have already said, they are penetrated with the consciousness and understanding of the purpose of the war. These qualities were lacking in our troops. But has any one taken the trouble of explaining to them the importance of the present war to our country, and what benefit would be derived from its victorious ending? They were only told to "go and shed their blood for the Czar and the country." It is true that this is beautiful, this means already a great deal. But in the present century, when, in spite of the low intellectual standard of the people, the lower classes begin to consider the present conditions critically, this is not yet all that is necessary for conscious inspiration, indispensable to gain victory over the enemy, especially

an enemy like the Japanese, possessing more perfect military technique. Even now, after our defeat at Mukden, when the continuance of war until its victorious ending has become still more necessary to us, when the aim has grown more clearly defined, no one deems it necessary to explain all this to the troops, to tell them what they are shedding their blood for, what that victory is needed for. Tell them, lastly, that this victory is needed by us to re-establish our prestige as a great, powerful nation, to maintain our territory in the Far East and guard it from the encroachment of the Japanese, who after having gained a strong foothold in Korea and Manchuria, may take it from us whenever they please, and becoming, in case of our defeat, absolutely invulnerable as far as we were concerned. Last of all, it is impossible to throw to the winds hundreds of millions of the nation's savings, expended for the construction of the railways and the creation of cities in Manchuria. The Russian people will die, but will never surrender their Saratoff, Tamboff, Tomsk, or Irkutsk. Why should Kharbin, created like these with our flesh and blood, be less dear to us? Tell them all this, and you will see that they will be penetrated with the conscious understanding of the aim and its attainment, and that they will lead us to victory like their fathers and grandfathers. And then the soul of the man, loving Russia and the Russians, will not be racked by the pitying words pronounced by our friends for our consolation, so to say. These *paroles de condoléance* are far worse than the laughter of malicious joy that is heard in the camp of our enemies at each of our failures.

I have frequently heard the opinion that defeat would make us wise and force us to correct all the mistakes of our life, after which the economical conditions of Russia would soon improve and we would soon replace the losses suffered through this unfortunate war. France after the disaster of 1870 is pointed out as an example. But it seems to me that, in order to develop economically, it is necessary to be politically strong, it is needful to be

able to parry the blows coming from without, for there is not a nation in existence that would be sincerely glad of our progress, with the exception, maybe, of the Slavs. All are in fear of our power, and, everyone understands that economical progress would only increase our strength and would render us unconquerable indeed. Therefore, as soon as our economic progress will begin to give young, healthy shoots, liable to grow into a magnificent plant, our enemies, taking advantage of our political weakness, will again strike a blow against us, destroying the results of our dawning prosperity, and we will again return to the former condition, remaining some ten years behind universal culture.

Our victory over the Japanese would reëstablish our prestige and give us back the respect and glamor we have lost. The France of 1870 can not serve as an example to us. The conditions were different; her downfall and the rise of Germany was of no interest to anybody, and this paralyzed the desire of Germany, who some ten years later was again desirous of striking a still more forceful blow, fearing her economic progress. Our conditions are not the same. There is no country to whom our progress might be useful. No one will take our part; everyone, on the contrary, will endeavor to weaken our strength and power. All our hope is centered in ourselves, and if there is any one smiling at us, it is only for the purpose of deriving some direct or indirect profit. We must conquer, and we can conquer if we get penetrated with the consciousness of our victory's necessity, and if we succeed in inspiring our troops with this consciousness.

It is said that it is necessary to make peace. Very well, let us consider the demands of Japan as the conqueror:

(1) The evacuation of the whole of Manchuria; (2) The cession of Sakhalin; (3) The disarmament of Vladivostok and the condition of having no fleet at this point; (4) Political power over Korea; (5) The keeping of Port Arthur; (6) An indemnity of, let us say, 1,000,000,000 roubles.

We would thus lose our railway as far as Vladivostok, and we would have to build another branch from Sretensk to Vladivostok and again expend over 250,000,000 roubles. Our supremacy in the Pacific Ocean would be brought down to zero, and our distant boundary would be left to fate and to Japan. The payment of 1,000,000,000 roubles would be the equivalent of a burden of 100,000,000 roubles being placed on our budget, at a time when they are most needed for the development of culture, and there are no two opinions as to its being necessary. And all this independently of the cession of Sakhalin, the humiliation of national dignity and self-love from the loss of prestige and of hundreds of millions expended on the construction of the Chinese Railway and cities.

No, you may say what you wish, but I do not believe that a true citizen of the Russian Empire would consent at present to all this when far from all the resources have been exhausted for the turning of the war into a new phase more favorable to us.

I might understand the following compromise: Let Japan govern Korea *de facto;* let us withdraw our troops from Manchuria, keeping the concession of the railway; let the Japanese have even Port Arthur and the Chinese Railway have Dalny as its terminus. But Japan, intoxicated with her triumphs, would not accept even such conditions.

I am more than convinced that should the Zemski Sobor (or whatever that assembly might be named) be convened to-morrow, it would surely resolve to continue the war straining all efforts to do so.

Chapter XVII.

THE FIRING.

A mass of projectiles and bullets are fired uselessly by the artillery and the infantry, and therefore after each big battle the Army remains without any kind of ammunition. The same may be noticed among the Japanese. They shoot often without any reason and without need.

It is said that the artillery causes great losses. Frankly speaking, I did not notice this in the Mukden fights. It is true that I could see only the effect of the Japanese artillery. I do not know how ours worked; I know only that the Japanese guns caused very insignificant losses to us. I do not believe that more than 2 per cent of all losses in killed and wounded fell to the share of the artillery. It is true that many and frequent shots were fired, and everywhere the roar of the artillery was heard, everyhere flew shrapnel and *shimosas,* but they were all fired into space, without causing any damage.

In Manchuria, on broken *terrain,* covered with many hills, the artillery fires from behind these heights. The area of the hill in rear of which it is supposed that the artillery has taken up its position being small, it is not difficult to shower projectiles upon it and reach the artillery. It is easier to observe here the effect of the projectiles. Even here it is not always possible to determine in rear of which hill the artillery is posted. But in a plain like that, for example, where Mukden is situated, where the villages are close to each other and surrounded by clay walls and planted with trees, nothing can be seen at a distance of two hundred *sajens.* Yet there are many gullies and folds in the ground from which artillery can operate remaining absolutely invisible

to the enemy. Try to find it; it is impossible to shower projectiles over an area of several scores of square miles.

The artillery, in general, adapted itself very rapidly to the technique of artillery combat and quickly grew used to the character of the locality, taking advantage of its topographical features. The Japanese artillery, as far as the guns are concerned, is inferior to ours. Our field gun can fire 8 shots per minute, while the Japanese can fire only from 4 to 5 shots. But they manage better than we do all-around fire over a certain area which is the only effective one. They maintain their batteries in better touch and often several batteries of various units operate in joint action against the same area. Our artillery knows nothing of such joint action.

Our artillery has one general projectile—the shrapnel, which explodes, according to desire, either at a certain distance or by concussion. The Japanese have a system of loading in which the cartridge is separate from the projectile, and this decreases the rapidity of their fire. They have two kinds of projectiles: shrapnel, bursting at a determined distance, and the *shimosas* (grenades), bursting by concussion. There is no doubt that there is greater alvantage in having only one kind of projectiles—there being no confusion, met with when firing with two different kinds, because it may often happen that when it would be necessary to fire shrapnel, grenades are at hand, and *vice versa*. This was often noticed in the Japanese Army. However, in the present war, in which the numerous Chinese villages, surrounded by clay walls, play the *rôle* of fortified points, firing with grenades with the aim of destroying these fortifications is of great importance, shrapnel being absolutely useless for this purpose. The grenade in other cases is of little advantage, the only effect produced being solely a moral one. The sound made by it when flying and bursting is exceedingly disagreeable and acts very badly upon the nerves. However, with time the nerves are blunted and its influence becomes almost unnoticeable.

Large-caliber guns are indispensable for the damaging of fortifications, but it is very difficult to take them along and use them with the field artillery. Fine roads are necessary first of all. The Japanese could take advantage of these only during winter. Moreover, one must be sure of victory, as they hamper greatly the retreat, not to say that in such a case it is quite impossible to carry them away. I think that the artillery which is placed in position would be more useful if it remained there until the last moment during the attack, causing great losses to the enemy by its fire, even though it be necessary to abandon the guns afterwards in retreating.

Our field mortars, having a maximum range of 3 *versts,* are of little use, as at so short a distance from the enemy it is difficult to render them invisible and they risk being fired at and destroyed.

According to my opinion, rifle fire is often indulged in without deriving any advantage whatever from it. It is of little effect at long range, especially in thickly inhabited localities, where it is difficult to distinguish anything, even at short distances, on account of the mass of villages covering them. It seems to me that the soldiers ought to be kept from firing at long range—thus developing stolidity and coolness in them.

To illustrate long-range firing, I will mention the following incident:

The white smoke of bursting shrapnel was seen here and there on the horizon. I asked the officer detailed to the general conducting the combat:

"This smoke seen there on the horizon, is this the enemy's shrapnel?"

"Yes; our positions are there."

I started for that point. I passed a redoubt occupied by our troops. Our battery was firing in rear of me and the projectiles flew over my head. The whistling sound produced by them was more disagreeable than that of the enemy's shrapnel bursting

around me. This uncanny feeling was increased by the fact that there were cases when the shrapnel burst prematurely. I began to wonder what it meant. Our positions were far away, while the artillery was here. But, as nothing was said to me when I passed our redoubt, I proceeded further. Suddenly I heard the patter of bullets to one side of me; I looked, and saw our advanced line of sharpshooters. I dismounted and approached one of the soldiers, who was firing in kneeling position. I knelt beside him and gazed in the direction of his aim, but, in spite of all my efforts, I saw nothing. At last I asked the soldier:

"What are you firing at?"

"There, at the Japanese."

"Where are they? I do not see them."

"There, there."

"Do you see them?"

"Not by any means."

"Why do you fire, then?"

"Just so, it makes you feel gayer."

It came out that at the point where the shrapnel was bursting were Japanese positions, and not ours, while the bursting shrapnel was that fired by the battery shooting over my head when I passed.

Chapter XVIII.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE SURRENDER OF PORT ARTHUR.

Speaking of artillery firing, I can not help mentioning the surrender of Port Arthur, which I can by no means get out of my mind, not so much the very fact of its surrender—for there is no fortress that could hold out forever—as the mode of surrender—*i. e.*, the conditions on which the capitulation was made and all that General Stoessel found necessary to accept and punctually execute. I shall not discuss the possibility of Port Arthur holding out still longer, although I had the occasion to talk with many of the defenders of the fortress who maintained that there was no imperative need of surrender at the time. The conditions of the capitulation were such as are accepted when the enemy enters a fortress by force, and not when it is willfully surrendered, and there was no necessity of agreeing to abandon to the enemy all the guns, projectiles, and other *matériel* of war in all their integrity. What would the Japanese have done to the defenders of Port Arthur had they taken it by storm, and not entered it on the conditions of the capitulation? Nothing, except laying down the same conditions as those accepted by General Stoessel; but then all the guns might have been exploded or submerged, as well as all the projectiles. They might not have freed General Stoessel and the other officers who returned to Russia with him. But no dishonor would have fallen upon them, and neither Russia nor the Army would have suffered from it. But the surrender of the guns and projectiles to the enemy wrought a great deal of harm to our troops. I cannot forget the horror which took possession of me at Mukden, near the Imperial Tombs, when

a shrapnel burst close to me. I saw on the fuse which I picked up the letter T and Arabic figures. An officer who happened to be with me explained to me that this was our shrapnel. The shots did not cease, and in our terror we thought that our own battery was firing at us. But a colonel of the General Staff, who arrived at that moment, explained to us that opposite to us were drawn up the Port Arthur troops and they were firing against our men with our own guns and our own projectiles. Here are the results of the capitulation, thanks to which Russia had the pleasure of seeing a few months earlier the hero of Port Arthur and his wife and to strew with flowers the road over which they traveled, in the perfume of which General Stoessel must have smelt likewise the reek of the innocent blood of the Russian heroes struck down by the guns and with the projectiles which he delivered to the enemy, so as to announce quicker to Russia how honestly and sacredly he had fulfilled his duty to the Czar and to his country.

I cannot speak coolly about all this—I saw the mutilated bodies of our soldiers struck down by our own guns, I heard their moans and their curses, and my heart sheds tears of blood at the very thought of these horrors.

Chapter XIX.

THE CARRYING OF THE WOUNDED FROM THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

The carrying of the wounded from the field of battle is likewise a very important question. There is no soldier in the world who would not, if this could be done without exposing himself to shame and reprimand, leave the ranks during battle. This is why we see during battle the wounded led and carried by soldiers. It is true that, in addition to the desire of getting away from the danger zone for a while, they are likewise prompted by a feeling of humanity; his comrade is moaning and losing blood, how were it possible to let him lie? But as one wounded is mostly carried by four men, we can easily imagine how thin the ranks would grow if the soldiers were allowed to carry off the wounded. The officers forbid it as far as they can, but they too are men and their comrades fall at their sides; and if permission is given to take up an officer, the same permission must be given for the soldier, and the result is that all the wounded are thus carried from the field. More than once on this account success did not crown our arms.

It would be cruelty to demand that the wounded be left until the end of the battle or the advent of night; but however cruel be such a request, if no other solution can be found to this question, we must insist on it, for humaneness, displayed in such a way, brings great harm, carrying in its wake the destruction of entire units, of thousands of men.

It seems to me, however, that there is a solution, if not an entirely satisfactory one, one at least diminishing the harm ensuing from the soldiers' exit from the ranks for the purpose of

picking up the wounded. Why should not our charitable societies, which have sent so many well-organized detachments to the front for the assistance of our wounded warriors, create special units of carriers for the purpose of picking up the wounded and carrying them from the field of battle. The society or institution which would do this would in reality do a great deal of good. It would not only ease the sufferings of the wounded by having them taken up more quickly, but would free from such duty soldiers, whose principal aim is fighting, thus keeping them in the ranks for battle, in which every man is of value. During lull in military operations these carriers might be employed for other useful work. This is easily found on the theater of war.

It seems to me that this matter ought to be considered. Something might, perhaps, be done in that direction.

As a rule, assistance is indispensable to the wounded on the very field of battle. It is badly organized in our Army. Each soldier has his individual emergency package, but not every one of them knows how to use it, and there are wounded who would not be able to dress their wounds themselves. There ought to be a greater number of flying detachments which should give first aid to the wounded on the field of battle, then it would not be so necessary for some of the wounded to be immediately evacuated.

Chapter XX.

THE RUSSIAN SOLDIER.

Before closing this essay, I must say a few words about our soldier.

Our soldier is very enduring; he is accustomed to all kind of privations, and bears them with resignation and without a murmur. I will not say that he is endowed with that dashing, reckless bravery with which people generally associate the Russian soldier. He goes forward because it must be so, but exaltation is not developed in him. He is not used to independence, his initiative is limited, he is not sufficiently observative and orients himself badly; I had more than once occasion to observe that he remembers but imperfectly the roads by which he traveled and the villages in which he has been (the Cossacks are an exception; they orient themselves very well). This is not because he is lacking in innate qualities and capacities; he has been rendered such by his military education, the drill *en masse,* without any independent problems, without any necessary training during maneuvers for the purpose of his being able to orient himself in an unknown locality. The soldier in battle is steadfast in the repulse of attacks and intrepid in attack as long as he has a leader possessing the same qualities and as long as he is with him; but as soon as the commander leaves the ranks, the soldiers feel lost like chickens without their mother hen. I had occasion to observe myself how bravely a company went into the fire as long as all the officers had not been put *hors de combat;* but after the loss of their last officer the soldiers grew confused, not knowing what to do, and had not the commander of a neighboring company come to their assistance by sending one of his

officers, the company would have retreated. It seems to me that, taking into consideration this peculiarity of our soldier, there ought to be in each regiment some reserve officers who should, in case of the loss of all the officers of a company, replace these. (This only for the present war, for it must be hoped that for future wars our soldier will be different.) The commander of one company cannot always know what is taking place in the neighboring units, and, moreover, he may not have any officers to spare. This is of great importance, considering the enormous loss among the officers which takes place in the present war.

The Russian soldier is more than any other penetrated with love, kindness, and thoughtfulness. If he love his officer, his care for him knows no bounds; he becomes his most tender nurse. He does everything in his power to lighten his life in the field; he endeavors to find him a safe place in battle, risking his own life while looking for such a point.

His kindheartedness is most conspicuous in his treatment of the prisoners. A Japanese prisoner becomes the guest of the Russian soldiers. They slap his shoulder, pronounce a few words, endeavoring to make him understand that he is safe among them. We often see scenes like the following and which are most touching: A Japanese is sitting down; by his side is a Russian soldier. They converse and seem to understand each other. How they manage this I really do not know. Now the Russian soldier gets a lump of sugar and with a kindly smile, as if saying that he would like to treat him with something better, he presses it upon the Japanese. The Japanese tries to thank him the best he can for the tidbit. Taking from out of his uniform a white cake, he presents it to the soldier. The latter breaks off a small piece and gives back the rest, trying to explain that the Japanese, who is not accustomed to our brown bread, will need it himself. And both laugh in a kindly way. It is difficult to realize that these men rushed fiercely against each other some half-hour ago. I do not know how our men live in Japan, but the Japanese can-

not complain of the treatment received by their prisoners at our hands.

The soldier is assured that a soldier's profession is one of the most honorable ones, but he does not see this: he is not treated as a man pursuing a high profession. Should more consideration be manifested toward the soldier by the authorities and the public not only in time of war, but also in time of peace, the *morale* of our troops would be far higher.

What a difference between our system of discipline and the Japanese. The Japanese discipline is more strict than ours in principle, while in form it is more humane. It does not lower human dignity or the honorable calling of the soldier. A private may, in the presence of the officer, smoke, drink, and be present in all public institutions. Being in the same places as his officer, he learns to behave everywhere equally correctly, thus acquiring the esteem of the entire population. In our Army it is quite the opposite. In the presence of an officer the soldier has no right to smoke, nor to be at any public place, while if, as has been said already, he had the possibility of going to various public institutions where his officer goes, he would acquire a certain tact in his relations not only to his officers, but everybody in general; a thing which would influence the general course of his life and raise the standard of his moral and human dignity. At present, unfortunately, the soldier is not always correct in various public institutions, and, on the other hand, our relations to the soldier lower his human and soldierly dignity. Is not the contemptuous "thou" with which, according to regulations, the officer addresses the soldier, even the one who has received a high education or wears a high military decoration—the St. George, an insult to the "honorable calling of the soldier"? We must abandon in this case likewise the obsolete form, and adapt ourselves to the demands exacted by the new conditions of life.

I cannot help remarking that the defense of the traditional "thou" in addressing the soldier, as met in military literature, can

not be considered in any way sufficient, as it is distinguished by great insincerity and *naïve* sophisms. The military calling is in truth an honorable one, and this honor ought to be evidenced everywhere down to the lowest ranks of military hierarchy. All deviations from this rule, arising from ancient customs which took birth in times of serfdom, have long lost all right to existence and are in direct contradiction to the new conditions of Army life and the national self-consciousness asserting itself so vividly.

In Japan the soldier's calling is truly honorable and the troops are respected by the entire population. I will mention a very characteristic though maybe somewhat misplaced fact, told me by a lieutenant of our fleet:

"A young and very pretty flower-girl, named Ishine-Musme, brought us beautiful chrysanthemums every morning. She attracted me greatly, and I wished to make a closer acquaintance with her. For this purpose I had recourse to an old woman of great skill in persuasion, whose eloquence few could withstand. She never stopped at anything, there was no woman she would not approach. When I asked her to make me acquainted with little Ishine-Musme, she answered rudely: 'No, no; I can't do it.' 'How so?' I asked with astonishment. 'Why not?' 'She is a soldier's friend; that is why I cannot speak to her about it.'"

This old woman, who would try to persuade the daughter of a high official, without any qualms of conscience, did not wish to harm a soldier, a defender of her country.

Two armies stand opposite each other in this war. The one is conscious of its dignity and its citizen's duty toward its country, understanding its aim and purpose. Each Japanese soldier is conscious that in case of victory over the enemy, whose military strength appalled all nations, the glory of his people would be great, and Russia, who hindered Japan from reaping the benefits of her victory over China, will be punished accordingly. He knows that his country would acquire Sakhalin with its fisheries, so necessary to the Japanese population; Korea with its vast fer-

tile area which would come under full control of Japanese emigrants, the dream of their forefathers; that the commerce of Japan would develop extraordinarily, and that all this would enhance the honor and importance of Japan in the eyes of the entire world, and that it would promote the economic life of the country, improving the material condition of all her citizens.

The other is imbued only with the naked formula of discipline, which has already lost its former meaning, of absolute obedience and submission to the will of the chiefs wherever it might lead.

Thus the difference in impulse with which the two armies marched against each other is enormous. If we add to this all the above-mentioned conditions, we can clearly see how great must be the power of the Russian soldier to be able to hold out so long against the Japanese Army in spite of all its advantages.

Between our officer and our soldier there is no other link but that of service. All intellectual communion is lacking; the interests of the soldier have nothing in common with the interests of the officer, who in the eyes of the private is a member of the privileged class, which generally is not looked upon with favor by our lower class—the mass of our Army. The lack of ordinary citizen's rights increases this estrangement. Everything is thus maintained only by service relations, by service ties. But this link disappears as soon as the soldier leaves the Army and returns to his village. Life outside the Army gives nothing which could alter his view of the privileged classes in general and the corps of officers in particular, and it may be easily understood that at his return to the ranks the lack of such a link is felt still more, especially taking into consideration that he comes to a new *cadre* of officers. We observe a different condition of affairs among the Japanese. There all the elements of the Army are closely united by political and national interests, and this, in addition to the strict discipline, renders the Japanese Army a closely united whole.

The Russian soldier is an untouched spring of high innate virtues. Raise his standard of culture, give the right direction to his thought, and the like will not be found in the entire world, in spite of his nature lacking martial spirit.

The reader cannot help asking the question: How do the soldiers of other nationalities, belonging to our Army, behave in this war? In answer to this, I must say that I have never dreamt of the existence of such unity, such solidarity among soldiers of different nationalities and religions. They all bear without a murmur all the discomforts of the campaign, are equally brave and stolid in the fight. No feud is noticed among them; they all live as one friendly family, without paying the slightest attention to their differences of nationality and religion. The common fate united them and formed them into a conglomerate of so solid a composition that races more indigenous by far would break against them. The Poles are splendid, intrepid soldiers. I accidentally was a witness to the following conversation (I cannot say if it was an officer who talked with a soldier or someone else):

"You fight bravely, boys."

"We do our best; we try not to be outdone by the others."

"After all, what are you fighting for? The Russians oppress you and give you no rights."

"That is in Russia, that is another matter. Here we are soldiers and must fight. A soldier's honor is above all things."

The Caucasians, Bessarabians (Roumanians), Finns, Germans, all behave alike.

How great the number of anecdotes on the cowardice of the Jews! Yet in the present war many of them have shown themselves to be excellent, brave, and intelligent soldiers. Many of them have been rewarded by the St. George decoration, some of them have even two and three of these decorations, and these crosses have been awarded them by the company, not by the

authorities. And how the other soldiers loved these Jews! The officers likewise could not say enough in their praise.

All these gladsome features show that the Russian people are devoid of national and religious fanaticism, transmitted from generation to generation, which admits of no criterion, no reasoning, which hates blindly and unconsciously all that is foreign.

When all the peoples of the Russian Empire will enjoy the same rights; when all the artificial limitations, at present the cause of the existing feud, will have disappeared; when, enjoying the same political rights, all will have become equally faithful citizens—then there will be formed one great Russian family, always ready to rise as one man in the defense of the country, for only under such conditions could be secured to all material welfare, the main motive principle of the masses, and then only will the political power of Russia rise to an inaccessible height.

April, 1905.

RUSSIAN WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

Russian Verst, 1. Geographic Mile, 0.144.
English Statute Mile, 0.663. Degree of Equator, 0.0095.

1 verst equals 500 sagens or 3,500 feet;
1 sagen equals 3 arshins or 7 feet;
1 arshin equals 16 vershoks or 28 inches;
1 foot equals 12 inches;
1 inch equals 10 lines.

WEIGHTS.

1 berkovets equals 10 poods;
1 pood equals 40 Russian pounds or 36 English pounds;
1 pound equals 32 lots;
1 lot equals 3 zolotniks;
1 zolotnik equals 96 dolias.

COINS.

1 imperial equals 10 roubles or $5.00;
1 half imperial equals 5 roubles or $2.50;
1 rouble equals 100 copecks or $0.50;
1 poltinnik equals 50 copecks or $0.25;
1 dvugrivenny equals 20 copecks or $0.10;
1 piatachek equals 5 copecks or $0.02½.

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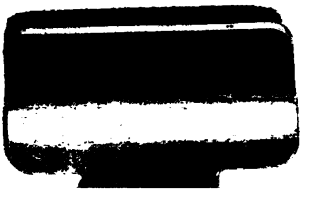
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